

CURRENT *History*

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DECEMBER, 1969

SOUTHEAST ASIA

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CURRENT History

DECEMBER, 1969

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In this issue eight articles discuss recent events in Southeast Asia. The first author shows that "The N.L.F. has attempted to take advantage of the apparent differences between the United States and the G.V.N. by pursuing two complementary policies . . . [military] pressure is maintained in an effort to communicate to the United States that a continuation of the war will simply be too costly. . . . The N.L.F. has [also] indicated that it is willing to accept a political settlement. . . ."

Politics in South Vietnam

BY JERRY M. SILVERMAN

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IN SOUTH VIETNAM, one is faced with a situation which exemplifies very well the French saying: *Le plus ça change, le plus c'est la même chose* (i.e.: The more things change, the more they remain the same). In 1954, many people thought that the agreement reached between the French and the Vietminh at Geneva had ended the hostilities of the Indochina war. Yet today, the dimensions of what some now call the Second Indochina war have drastically exceeded those of the original conflict.

In 1963, some observers believed that if the corrupt Diem regime was removed, a nationalist alternative to the Communists would "win the people's hearts and minds" and the war there would soon end. Yet Diem was overthrown and the war continued.

¹ In attempting to accomplish this task, it is necessary to caution the reader that the significance of particular events in Vietnam are seldom obvious. It is clear that one of the major problems confronting the G.V.N. and the U.S. has been their inability to judge accurately the current situation at any given time. Therefore, much of what follows is necessarily speculative. Perhaps in 20 years we will "know" what happened in Vietnam since 1954. However, it would be sheer folly for anybody to claim that sort of expertise at the present time.

In 1965, with the Communists apparently on the verge of success, some observers felt that the commitment of increased United States military components would destroy the National Liberation Front (N.L.F.). Yet United States troops were committed and the war continued. In 1968, the N.L.F. launched a general offensive against the cities and towns of South Vietnam and many people thought that the Government of South Vietnam (G.V.N.) would collapse. Yet although it suffered grievous political losses, the G.V.N. survived and the war continued. In 1969, many people expected that the end of American bombing of North Vietnam and the commencement of negotiations in Paris among all parties to the dispute would result in a cease-fire. Yet although subsequent to the writing of this article a cease-fire agreement may be reached, it is likely that the war will continue.

The purpose of this article is to consider the events of 1969 as they relate to the situation in South Vietnam and speculate on their political significance for the immediate future.¹

The year 1969 dawned in the midst of a dispute over the seating arrangements for the long awaited negotiations in Paris. This dispute, although apparently comic in its overtones, illustrated the fact that there were fundamental differences between the G.V.N. and its United States allies. The dispute over the seating arrangements had begun on November 26, 1968, and was to last until January 16, 1969. 'Ostensibly, the dispute was between the G.V.N. and the United States, on one side, and the North Vietnamese (Hanoi) and the N.L.F. on the other. However, that dispute had been immediately preceded by a public argument between the United States and the G.V.N. which had begun on November 2, when the G.V.N. had refused to attend the negotiation sessions in Paris.²

DIFFERENCE IN ALLIED GOALS

Thus, the conflict over the seating arrangements is best viewed as an extension of the more basic problem. The fact is that while its own preservation is absolutely necessary for the G.V.N., its preservation is not necessary but only highly desirable for the United States. The obvious disagreement between the United States and the G.V.N. between November 2 and November 26, 1968, probably indicated that the United States government and the G.V.N. had finally recognized the fundamental nature of this difference.

Given the situation in January, 1969, at least four general questions present themselves. First, what accounts for the apparent shift in the United States government's attitude? Second, what have the N.L.F. and Hanoi done to take advantage of the new situation? Third, what adjustments has the G.V.N. made in an attempt to preserve itself? Fourth, what are the prospects for the immediate future?

Obviously, many factors contributed to the

change of attitude on the part of the United States. Most of these were related to the American domestic political situation and to increasing criticism of past policies by people within the various United States agencies operating in South Vietnam. However, the catalyst for these divergent pressures was clearly the N.L.F.'s February, 1968, *Tet* offensive.

RESULTS OF THE TET OFFENSIVE

The *Tet* offensive illustrated the fact that if the policy of 1965-1968 were to be continued by the United States and the G.V.N. as before, the costs to the United States would be unacceptable in terms of any foreseeable result. This was not to deny that some progress towards the common G.V.N. and United States goal had been made. Nor was it necessarily to accuse the G.V.N. of progressing at a pace slower than it could have set, given the situation. However, from the United States perspective, the firm achievement of the goal was no longer within reach within an acceptable amount of time, an acceptable economic cost in terms of material and monetary investment, or an acceptable political cost in terms of lives lost. Thus while it might be argued that the G.V.N. and the United States were "winning," *Tet* made it clear to almost everyone that they were not winning fast enough.

This did not mean that the United States had decided to abandon its effort in South Vietnam, but it did mean that the United States was prepared to accept a negotiated solution to the conflict containing a much higher risk of eventual N.L.F. control than was acceptable to the G.V.N. The United States was willing to continue the struggle in order to provide some subsequent security for the G.V.N., but not so much security as the G.V.N. wanted nor had expected. Thus, the G.V.N. began to suspect that the United States would agree to a solution that included provision for N.L.F. participation in an "interim" coalition national government. The G.V.N. clearly feared that the result would be a façade behind which the United

² See *The New York Times*, November 12, 1968. For the complete texts of the November 26, 1968, U.S. and G.V.N. announcements that the boycott of the Paris talks was over, refer to *Current History*, February, 1969, pp. 109 and 116.

States could withdraw with a shred of honor and the G.V.N. could be destroyed.³

Apparently the G.V.N. viewed the proposal for peace negotiations in Paris in this context. Thus the G.V.N. negotiators apparently insisted that the subject matter of the talks be subdivided into political and military categories. Further, they maintained that they should have the dominant voice in any settlement of the political issues in the conflict. The future existence of the G.V.N. as a government at the national level is probably not negotiable. However, the amount of United States participation in the continuing conflict is negotiable. The events of 1969 in South Vietnam essentially revolved around G.V.N. attempts to maintain United States involvement and N.L.F. attempts to reduce that involvement.

If the above interpretation is correct, then the policy pursued by the G.V.N. in reacting to the Paris peace conference proposal was well executed in terms of short-run consequences. What has transpired during 1969?

³ It is true that U.S. government spokesmen did not indicate the negative *strategic* consequences of the Tet offensive. However, the negative short-run political consequences were recognized almost universally. For example, General William C. Westmoreland (former Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam), *Report on The War in Vietnam* (Washington, D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969), pp. 160-161, 170, 183, 235; Clark Clifford (former U.S. Secretary of Defense), "A Vietnam Reappraisal," *Foreign Affairs*, July, 1969, pp. 601-622; Henry A. Kissinger (currently Special Assistant to the President of the United States on National Security Affairs), "The Vietnam Negotiations," *Foreign Affairs*, January, 1969, pp. 215-216. For a more optimistic interpretation of the consequences stemming from the Tet offensive, see Herman Kahn, "If Negotiations Fail," *Foreign Affairs*, July, 1968, pp. 627-641.

⁴ On May 8, 1969, the N.L.F. presented a ten-point "overall solution" to the war. Points 4 and 5 constitute the proposal for a coalition government: "Principles and Main Content of the Overall Solution," *Vietnam Courier*, 216 (May 12, 1969), 1-2 (Note: *Vietnam Courier* is published in Hanoi by the North Vietnamese). The emphasis in point 5 is on those elements that "stand for peace, independence and neutrality." This probably excludes elements of the G.V.N. at this time, but could be broadened to include them at a later date. For an indication that the United States might be willing to accept some form of coalition government "following free elections," see U.S. Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird's interview, "What is the answer to ABM and the War?" *US News and World Report*, April 7, 1969, pp. 30-36.

The N.L.F. has attempted to take advantage of the apparent differences between the United States and the G.V.N. by pursuing two complementary policies. On the military front, pressure is maintained in an effort to communicate to the United States that a continuation of the war will simply be too costly in the broad sense discussed above. It is no longer necessary for the N.L.F. to confront the United States with major military conflicts within South Vietnam in order to communicate the message. With the memories of Tet and May, 1968, still vividly in mind, steady reminders of its military presence in South Vietnam through harassment throughout the countryside and approaches to the urban centers are sufficient. This aspect of N.L.F. policy is, in its fundamentals, not very different from its earlier policy. As was the case in 1965, it is unlikely that the United States would be willing to withdraw unilaterally simply because of a continuance of N.L.F. military pressure. Therefore, the N.L.F. has indicated that it is willing to accept a political settlement that may also be acceptable to the United States, i.e., coalition government.⁴

The N.L.F. must be aware that the G.V.N. is not willing to accept coalition government at the national level, especially if that means the immediate or prior withdrawal of the United States presence.

Thus, its offer of a coalition government creates a situation whereby the N.L.F. can win either way. If the G.V.N. does not accept a coalition when the United States is willing to do so, Saigon must increasingly be viewed as intransigent by those in Washington. This could result in eventual United States abandonment of the struggle. On the other hand, if the G.V.N. does eventually accept the idea of a coalition government, the conflict will continue within the government, with the G.V.N. considerably reduced in power and the N.L.F. most likely to achieve eventual dominance.

The primary evidence for N.L.F. preparations for an eventual coalition government was the creation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Viet-

nam (P.R.G.) on June 8, 1969. The P.R.G. was created by a "Congress of People's Representatives" which met somewhere in South Vietnam on June 6, 7 and 8, 1969, attended by 88 delegates and 72 "guests."⁵ The groups responsible for convening the Congress were the N.L.F. and the Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace

Forces (A.N.D.P.F.). The A.N.D.P.F. was created in Hue during the first days of the Tet offensive.⁶ On May 15, 1969, one month prior to the establishment of the P.R.G. and 7 days after the N.L.F.'s presentation of its "Overall Solution," the A.N.D.P.F. endorsed the N.L.F.'s 10 points.⁷

P.R.G. COALITION

In addition to the N.L.F. and the A.N.D.P.F., three political parties and six mass organizations were represented at the congress.⁸ Although ostensibly a coalition of various nationalist parties and groups within South Vietnam, the P.R.G. is only a slightly broader extension of the N.L.F.⁹ However, its significance should not be discounted. The creation of the P.R.G. establishes a set of institutions which could serve as a basis for a coalition government in much the same manner that the G.V.N. views its own 1967 Constitution.¹⁰

That the primary purpose of the P.R.G. was to establish the preconditions for a coalition government was stated explicitly by article 5 of the "Fundamental Resolution of the South Vietnam Congress of People's Representatives":

The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam . . . creates conditions for the formation of a Provisional Coalition Government with a view to organizing free general elections, electing a Constituent Assembly, working out a constitution and appointing the Government of South Viet Nam.¹¹

This was echoed by the North Vietnamese:

As pointed out in the Declaration of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, the structure and composition of the Government can be broadened if and when called for by the situation.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government is prepared to enter into consultations . . . with a view to setting up a provisional coalition government.¹²

VILLAGE COMMITTEES

In addition to the national-level P.R.G.¹³ the N.L.F. claims that "Revolutionary People's Committees have been established in

⁵ *Vietnam Courier*, 221 (June 16, 1969), 1, 5.

⁶ For brief discussions of the origins of the A.N.D.P.F. in 1968, see Richard Butwell, "The Many-sided Politics of South Vietnam," *Current History*, February, 1964, pp. 71ff.

⁷ "NLF Overall Solution: Basis For a Correct Settlement, *South Viet Nam: In Struggle*, 35 (June 1, 1969) 5 (Note: *South Viet Nam: In Struggle* is published by the N.L.F. Information Commission somewhere in South Vietnam).

⁸ The other parties and mass organizations represented at the convening congress were: the Vietnam People's Revolutionary party (the South Vietnamese branch of the Lao Dong party, i.e., the Communist Party of North Vietnam); the South Vietnam Democratic party, the South Vietnam Radical Socialist party and the Trade Union, Youth, Students, Women, Writers and Artists, Journalists and Teachers Unions for the Liberation of South Vietnam. "Appeal of the South Vietnam Congress of People's Representatives," *Vietnam Courier*, 221 (June 16, 1969), 10.

⁹ The relationship between the N.L.F. and the P.R.G. can be discerned from the following evidence: (1) of the 12 ambassadors of the P.R.G. to other countries, all were formerly the heads of the N.L.F. missions or representations in the respective countries (*South Viet Nam: In Struggle* [somewhere in South Vietnam], 40 [July 15, 1969], 5); (2) the 10 points of the N.L.F.'s "Overall Solution" (*op. cit.*) were unanimously adopted as the negotiating position of the P.R.G. by the convening congress of the South Vietnam Congress of People's Representatives (*Vietnam Courier* [Hanoi], 221 [June 16, 1969], 5); (3) the P.R.G. has adopted the flag of the N.L.F. as the National Flag of the Republic of South Vietnam ("Fundamental Resolution of South Vietnam Congress of People's Representatives, *op. cit.*, p. 4.); (4) the Head of the N.L.F. delegation to North Vietnam was appointed as Head of the Special Delegation of the P.R.G. to Hanoi (*Vietnam Courier* [Hanoi], 221 [June 16, 1969], 6); and (5) the N.L.F.'s delegation to the Paris negotiations was transformed, without any personnel changes, into the "Delegation of The Provisional Revolutionary Government of The Republic of South Vietnam" (*ibid.*).

¹⁰ For the G.V.N. view that the 1967 constitution provides the vehicle for and boundaries of N.L.F. participation within the government, see Nguyen Cao Ky, and Tran Chanh Thanh (former Foreign Affairs Minister of the G.V.N.), Press Conference, in *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (July 13-20, 1969), 6 (Note: *Viet-Nam Bulletin* is published by the Embassy of G.V.N. in Washington, D.C.).

¹¹ *Vietnam Courier*, 221 (June 16, 1969, 4 and 8.

¹² *Vietnam Courier*, 221 (June 16, 1969), 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*, and *Vietnam Courier*, 222 (June 23, 1969), 1, 8.

1,290 villages, 146 districts, 37 provinces and 5 cities in South Vietnam."¹⁴

The establishment of the P.R.G. enabled the N.L.F. to establish the claim that it is a full-fledged government with formal international recognition. By July 15, 1969, the P.R.G. claimed official recognition as the government of the Republic of South Vietnam by 23 foreign governments.¹⁵

The basic change in the G.V.N. negotiating position in 1969 has been its acceptance of *de facto* discussions with the N.L.F. It is fairly clear that this is what the United

States wants and expects. Of course, the G.V.N. has continued to insist that the Paris Peace Conference is a meeting between two parties; the aggressors and the defenders. Therefore, the G.V.N. continues to deny any legal recognition of the N.L.F. or the P.R.G.

However, the G.V.N. has indicated many times that it is willing to participate in substantive secret discussions with the N.L.F.¹⁶ On March 26, 1969, the chief of the G.V.N. delegation in Paris stated that private talks could take place with the N.L.F.¹⁷

Certainly, the G.V.N. is more concerned with assuming an image of flexibility towards the N.L.F. for the benefit of its United States allies than it is with accommodating the N.L.F. However, for whatever reason, the G.V.N. has adopted a moderate negotiating position. The most specific public announcement of this position was presented by South Vietnam President Nguyen Van Thieu during a nationwide television broadcast on July 11, 1969. The essence of this proposal was an invitation to the N.L.F. to renounce violence and participate in national elections. It is interesting to compare the G.V.N. six-point proposal of July 11 with the G.V.N. six-point proposal of April 8, 1969 (see Table I). Even a cursory comparison indicates a definite mellowing of the G.V.N. position.

A comparison of the P.R.G.'s ten-point "overall solution" and the G.V.N.'s six-point proposal of July 11, 1969, gives a superficial impression of similarity between their positions. Both emphasize the election of a government representing all segments of the South Vietnamese political system. However, there is a significant, perhaps irreconcilable, gulf between the two parties concerning the timing and methods of such an election.

The N.L.F. wants the institutions established in the form of the P.R.G. to serve as an interim government which would then establish the mechanism for a general election through a constitution drafted by a constituent assembly. The G.V.N., on the other hand, insists that the electoral machinery and schedule established by its 1967 constitution

¹⁴ *South Vietnam: In Struggle*, 40 (July 15, 1969), 1. There are 44 provinces within the G.V.N. administrative system, the number being used for reporting purposes by the P.R.G. The G.V.N. recognizes 2,552 villages and 13,822 hamlets. The July 15 issue of *South Vietnam: In Struggle* does not indicate which provinces they claim now have Revolutionary People's Committees. However, the *Vietnam Courier*, 223 (June 30, 1969) on page 8 listed 30 provinces and 4 cities by name.

¹⁵ The P.R.G. has established embassies in the U.S.S.R., China, North Korea, Cuba, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Albania, Cambodia, Algeria and Syria. In addition, although embassies have not been established, diplomatic relations have been established with South Yemen, Congo (Brazzaville), the U.A.R., Mauritania, Mali, the Sudan, Yugoslavia and Iraq. Further, the P.R.G. claims to be "developing diplomatic activities" in Ghana, Guinea, Cape Verde Island, Senegal, Tanzania, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Australia, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Canada, Chile, Ceylon, Indonesia and Cyprus. However, this latter group of countries are probably those which simply allow representatives of the P.R.G. to enter as individuals. "The Whole World is All Our Side," *South Vietnam: In Struggle*, 40 (July 15, 1969), 8, 10. According to an article entitled: "South Vietnam Republic P.R.G. Warmly Welcomed in the World" in the *Vietnam Courier*, 222 (June 23, 1969), 6, the United Republic of Tanzania has recognized the People's Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. However, since there is a contradiction within two equally reputable sources and the *South Vietnam: In Struggle* article is the most recently published, we have included the United Republic of Tanzania in this latter category.

¹⁶ Nguyen Cao Ky announced on January 27, 1969, that he was willing to hold "private talks with the other side" at some future time (*The New York Times*, January 28, 1969). On February 3, 1969, Ky announced that he was ready "to hold private talks now" with representatives of Hanoi, i.e., the N.L.F. (*The New York Times*, February 4, 1969).

¹⁷ Interview of Ambassador Pham Dong Lam with a correspondent of Australian radio and television networks, reported in *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (March 21-April 5, 1969), 1.

TABLE I: G.V.N. PROPOSALS COMPARED

April 8, 1969*

1. Communists must abandon their war of aggression.
2. Communists must withdraw their military forces from South Vietnam.
3. Communists must not use Laos and Cambodia as military sanctuaries.
4. The G.V.N. will implement its policy of National Reconciliation.
5. Reunification of Vietnam must be decided by free election.
6. An effective system of international control to guarantee against renewed Communist aggression must be established.

July 11, 1969**

1. All political parties must renounce violence and participate in elections.
2. Election committees composed of all political parties and groups must be established.
3. There must be international supervision of elections.
4. The time-table and methods of election are open to negotiations.
5. There will be no reprisals or discriminations following elections.
6. The G.V.N. will abide by the results of the elections.

* *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (April 6-20, 1969), 1.** The complete text of the television broadcast is reprinted in *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (July 29, 1969), 1-7.

provides the N.L.F. with the opportunity to participate in elections. As recently as July 12, 1969, the G.V.N. indicated that the constitution provides an appropriate vehicle for N.L.F. participation:

We need not raise the issue of amending the Constitution since the National Liberation Front has never claimed itself as Communist.¹⁸

A serious problem arising from the G.V.N. insistence on not violating the 1967 constitution is that elections for national level offices will not be held again until 1971. That is, elections for the President, Vice President and members of the Senate and National Assembly are not scheduled for another two years. Further, as the G.V.N. has pointed out, in their mixed presidential-parliamentary system, the government is not elected.¹⁹ Only the President, Vice President and the mem-

bers of the legislative branch are elected. The Prime Minister and his Cabinet (i.e., the government) are appointed by the President.

Thus, any coalition would have to be appointed by Thieu until 1971 and by his successor after that date. The result is that the N.L.F./P.R.G. is being invited to participate in local village and hamlet elections during 1969 and in elections for Province Chiefs in 1970. It is unlikely that the N.L.F./P.R.G. will agree to participate in local elections while the comprehensive governmental apparatus of the nation is controlled by the G.V.N.²⁰

Although the G.V.N. has adapted its negotiating position to the "peace offensive" of the N.L.F., the gulf between the belliger-

(Continued on page 365)

¹⁸ Press conference by Foreign Affairs Minister Tran Khanh Thanh on Saturday, July 12, 1969, *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (July 13-20, 1969), 6.

¹⁹ *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (March 21-April 5, 1969).

²⁰ For elaboration of this point, refer to my "A Canadian Peace-Keeping Force For South Vietnam?" *Canadian Forum*, XLIX (October, 1969). For an alternate argument that the N.L.F. might agree to participate in local elections, refer to Samuel P. Huntington, "The Bases of Accommodation," *Foreign Affairs* (July, 1968), pp. 642-656.

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He should own the land who rubs it between his hands each season.

—Old Vietnamese Proverb

The Vietminh could not possibly have carried on the resistance [against the French] for one year, let alone nine years, without the people's strong, united support.

—Joseph Alsop

in *The New Yorker*, June 25, 1955

In the Social Reconstruction mission, Land Reform as is natural has to be placed on the top line. . . . Nevertheless, we must bravely acknowledge that, until now, the results obtained are lowest in consideration of its goal and its requirements.

—President Nguyen Van Thieu

in a speech delivered January 18, 1968

Land Reform in Vietnam

BY ROY L. PROSTERMAN

Associate Professor of Law, University of Washington School of Law

IT SHOULD BE in no way surprising that in a country where the bulk of the population—still 60 per cent today—is dependent on the land as its sole source of livelihood (as has been the case in Vietnam for at least 2,000 years) the question of land tenure should assume gigantic proportions.* Tenure imbalance strikes at the very base of the country's economic and political stability. Historically, breaking up large holdings and transferring them to individual small owners was a means of power consolidation by new Vietnamese royal dynasties. Even as late as the first decades of the nineteenth century, Nguyen Anh, who founded the last dynasty, set about breaking up large feudal landholdings in Vietnam. This policy was pursued by his successor, who acceded to the throne in 1820. The advent of French colonialism

in the 1860's was accompanied by dramatic changes.

It is estimated that between 1880 and 1930 the land area devoted to rice in the fertile, southern region of Vietnam then known as Cochinchina (which included, in particular, the Mekong Delta region south of Saigon), grew by at least 400 per cent, with resulting increased yields. Yet, by 1930, the position of the Vietnamese peasant in the economy had so deteriorated that his situation was worse than it had been prior to French intrusion. Land was sold at absurdly cheap prices to colonialists who amassed vast holdings; the rice that could have put an end to peasant starvation was extracted through land rents and was exported, rather than made available to the indigenous population. The rough figures that are available indicate that during the 1930's some 57 per cent of the rural population of Cochinchina was landless.

As Joseph Buttinger, a leading Western historian of Vietnam, summed it up in *Vietnam: A Dragon Embattled*,¹ "the rural

* The author has just returned from his third extended trip to Vietnam to review progress in the land-reform area. This trip was taken under private grant, while the two earlier ones were made as the land-law consultant to the Stanford Research Institute survey of land tenure in Vietnam, undertaken for AID in 1967-1968.

¹ (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967).

masses became as dependent on the rich land-owners as the serfs of medieval Europe had been on their feudal lords."

After a third visit to Vietnam, in September, 1969, I had to conclude that the final word on success or failure of land reform as a program bearing on the conflict could not—quite—be written yet. Like Pearl lashed to the rail, and then rescued, this quintessential program had been up again and down again so many times over the last 15 years that even a week's lead time before publication might find one badly out of date. But at least for one sparkling moment, starting in May, 1969, and lasting at least through mid-fall, land reform was definitely "up" again. Whether or not the Vietnamese Senate or President Nguyen Van Thieu himself utilizes far reaching amendment powers to restore Thieu's genuinely excellent legislative proposal (after its evisceration at the hands of the lower house at the start of September), it would still be true that 1969 was the best year ever for South Vietnamese land reform. Unfortunately, this is not really saying much. Without a good bill to effect the transfer of privately owned lands, plus vigorous enforcement of the legislation and of programs begun earlier this year, South Vietnam will lose what is very likely her last chance to make sense out of this most basic of all "pacification" programs, and to acquire the leverage this might supply for a political settlement broadly satisfactory to various shades of American opinion.

LAND TENURE PATTERN

That the land problem is near the root of the conflict—as it was, for example, in China and in Cuba—has long been clear to most careful and scholarly observers; it is a point on which there has been close agreement among Bernard Fall (land reform is "as essential to success as ammunition for howitzers—in fact, more so"), Buttinger, Douglas Pike, and many, many others. Today, at least three-fifths of South Vietnam's population of about 17 million is rural and derives a livelihood chiefly from rice farming. About three-fifths of this rural population lives in the Mekong

Delta, south of Saigon, where 80 per cent of the country's rice is produced. Most of the remaining two-fifths of the farmers live in a narrow belt of riceland running up the coast—the area known as the Central Lowlands.

The tenure pattern under which the bulk of these farmers live and gain their sustenance is not fundamentally changed from that shown in the 1960–1961 Agricultural Census of South Vietnam, as confirmed by field work by the Stanford Research Institute (S.R.I.) in which I participated at the end of 1967. During the critical period of the conflict's development in the early 1960's only 257,000 out of 1,175,000—or 23 per cent—of the Mekong Delta's farming families owned all the land they worked. Their average holding was four and one-half acres. Another 334,000 families, or 28.5 per cent of the total, tilled six acres—four of which were rented, while 521,000 families, roughly 44 per cent, farmed an average of three and one-half acres of land that was *totally* rented. Thus, in the Delta, more than seven farming families out of 10 (44 per cent + 28.5 per cent = 72.5 per cent) were substantially dependent on tenant farming.

The massive dislocation of the war has reduced the rural population from 75 to 80 per cent to the current 60 per cent figure, and the exodus to the cities was probably proportionately greater among those who had no land of their own. But the 1967 field work showed that at least 60 per cent of the Delta's agricultural population, in the relatively secure areas (where the field work could be carried on), remained without ownership of land, and the size of holdings and conditions of tenure remained unchanged. In its percentage of landlessness, the Mekong Delta thus qualified as one of the four worst areas of the world—along with the Huk country of Central Luzon, Java, and northeastern Brazil—and equalled or exceeded pre-revolutionary China, Russia and Cuba.

The S.R.I. field work—the major portion of which consisted of nearly one thousand hour-long interviews with Mekong Delta residents, carefully randomized, and using an

extensively pretested set of questions and Vietnamese interviewers under American supervisors—uncovered further details, although most of these simply confirmed the accurate appraisals which had already been available for more than a decade. In the Delta, landlords supply virtually no inputs: no credit, seeds, implements, fertilizer or advice. They collect rents—typically one-third to one-half of the gross crop, and sometimes even more. The landlords of roughly half the tenanted land are absentees, so rent collection becomes an annual foray either by them or by agents—often local officials or military men who get a cut of what they collect.

Tenants can usually be evicted at will. They are held responsible for most, or all, of the rent even when their crops fail, for the rent is calculated in advance on an *estimate* of the gross crop. Thus, after major flooding reduced the harvest of 1966–1967—the Delta harvest period is from December to February—many tenants were held for rents that exceeded 75 per cent of their actual production. Should a tenant be unable to pay his rent, he is confronted with interest rates on the unpaid portion that *average* 60 per cent a year, and which in one case out of five exceed 120 per cent a year.

The situation is no better in the Central Lowlands. As the 1960–1961 census showed, the typical family—403,000 out of 695,000—lived on a two-acre farm, one acre of which was rented. About 74,000 families held rented land only, their average holding being one and one-tenth acres. Rents on the tenanted or share-cropped portion of lands in the Central Lowlands generally are 50 per cent of the gross crop, although here the actual crop is the measure more often than an estimate made in advance. Security of tenure, however, is as nonexistent as it is in the Delta.

These land-tenure figures can be given some perspective by noting that South Vietnamese calculations indicate that once the rents go much above one-fifth of the crop, even a three and one-half acre Delta plot (the average for the 44 per cent of families that the census showed to be living wholly on rented

land) does not produce enough rice to keep the average six-person household at recommended minimum sustenance levels.

The typical Central Lowlands mixed-tenure holding, as indicated, averages only two acres, one-half of which is rented.

A further finding of the S.R.I. study, contrary to a vast amount of conventional wisdom found in Saigon offices (but generally not found out in the field), was that the tenant farmers of the Mekong Delta—in an open-ended question with multiple responses allowed—regarded land ownership as a paramount concern five times as frequently as they regarded physical security as a paramount concern, and rated agricultural credit as a paramount concern four times as frequently as security.

THE VIETCONG PROGRAM

All the above data, however, relates to “tenancy” as it exists in areas under South Vietnamese government control. In areas where the Vietcong are in control, they have offered only one substantive program: land reform. The program has deep roots, adumbrated in the Joseph Alsop quotation that begins this article.

By the time that the Geneva Conference was convened in 1954, the Vietminh ruled 60 to 90 per cent of what is now South Vietnam. Their support by the rural population had accounted in substantial part for the crucial advantage that had enabled them to overcome the superior arms and manpower of the French. In their struggle, they had built their broad base of support on the strong foundation of anticolonial nationalism, and they had added to this (even more concretely than the Algerian rebels were to do a few years later) the attraction of land-tenure reform for the mass of the peasantry.

Beginning in 1945, in areas that they controlled, the Vietminh had enforced strict limitations on rent and interest rates. Lands held by the French, communal lands, and the land of “traitors” were confiscated and given to the poorer peasants. Beginning in 1953, the Vietminh undertook the second, more sweeping phase of their land reform program,

under a classification system similar to that which had been employed by the Communist Chinese ("landlord," "rich peasant," "middle peasant," "poor peasant" and "agricultural worker"). In its first stage of implementation this system was aimed at taking land from the first two groups and giving it to the last two. Wherever it was applied, the program utterly transformed the village social structure.

The sad history of the post-1954 years can only be briefly sketched here. The North Vietnamese moved to a stage featuring bloody village "trials" of the landlords and—very broadly defined—"rich peasants" (100,000 died, according to the best estimates), and then to collectivization. President Ngo Dinh Diem missed the chance to carry out a competitive democratic land reform, on models such as those of Mexico, Japan, Taiwan, Bolivia or South Korea (all of which had inaugurated sweeping land reforms before 1954). Instead, he adopted a law that was blatantly impossible to administer, attempting to control the landlord-tenant relationship—actually *restoring* the landlord-tenant relationship for hundreds of thousands of families in formerly Vietminh-controlled areas who had thought the land was now theirs—plus an extremely mild law regulating the acquisition of large holdings. The latter allowed retention of 247 acres (eventually raised to 284 in most cases), which was at least 30 times greater than the "retention limits" in the successful Asian land reform programs of Japan, South Korea and—ten years too late—Taiwan. It also suffered from multiple administrative defects.² Diem's program ground to a final halt in 1961, with benefits for only one out of ten tenant families. Local officials were allowed to retain and rent out the best of the acquired lands.

This left two great groups identifying the

Communists with land reform and Saigon with the interests of the landed oligarchy:

- About one million peasants who remained under Vietminh control even in Diem's heyday, and who continued to live under the economic and social transformations wrought by "first stage" (i.e., precollectivization) Communist land reform.

- The great mass of tenant farmers who returned to Diem's control, who not only gained no benefits from Diem's unworkable laws, but actually found the government reestablishing a relationship that the Vietminh had already sundered.

Under the circumstances, it was not only logical but virtually inevitable that at the end of the 1950's the Vietcong should become the active successors of the Vietminh, building popular support throughout the countryside with the promise of the maintenance and extension of the Vietminh land reforms.

Saigon's response, from 1961 onward, not only totally omitted any competitive land reform measures, but from late 1965 onward actually involved the elaboration of decrees which justified the ultimate, very common "pacification" process by which the American innocents, having "secured" a village and moved on, were followed by the landlords riding in on the jeeps with "ARVN" (the South Vietnamese Army) to reassert control over their former lands. Not surprisingly, but very tragically indeed, many Americans have died at the hands of enraged peasants who have associated them with "pacification" in this, its completed, sense.

Unfortunately, the role of AID³ and the United States State Department in all of this was pusillanimous. Starting with clear marching orders from President Dwight Eisenhower and those at the top in 1954 that made support for land reform a matter of high priority, working-level officials allowed themselves to be backed off step by step from a workable program by the clear signs of hostility emanating from major segments of the ruling elite. During 1960-1965, the United States Mission obligingly failed to have present in Vietnam even one full-time official dealing with the land reform problem, and a plethora of rationalizations sprang up about the need to rely on the landlord class

² One example: regulations ultimately gave landlords eight years in which to prove "preordinance" transfers to others that brought their holdings below the point where the law took hold; transfers to relatives and strawmen were common; and the author has met Vietnamese who openly admit that they still "own" over 2,000 acres.

³ The United States Agency for International Development.

TABLE I: ENEMY STRENGTH

	National Intelligence Estimate	C.I.A. Estimate
(1) Main force units	118,000 54,000 N. Viet. 64,000 Vietcong	160,000 80,000 N. Viet. 80,000 Vietcong
(2) Village guerrilla platoons and squads	70,000–90,000	100,000–120,000
(3) "Irregular" or self- defense militia	150,000	100,000
(4) Administrative and logistic apparatus	35,000–40,000	75,000–80,000
(5) Political cadres	75,000–85,000	80,000–120,000

for political stability. In the case of some officials, all these rationalizations stubbornly failed to give way even when the house of cards collapsed in the early 1960's and the preeminent role of the peasants in supporting the rebellion became clear.

PEASANT SUPPORT FOR THE WAR

It is this deeply rooted peasant support which has given the Vietnamese conflict the very strong "insurrection" or "civil war" flavor which it still retains, despite the highly publicized infusions of manpower from the North which began in 1965. The measures of this peasant support are not hard to find. In March, 1968, *The New York Times* noted that the Vietcong had been steadily able to recruit 5,000 to 7,000 men a month. Lieutenant Colonel William Corson, former head of the Marine's Combined Action Platoons (CAP) program, writing in the summer of 1968, noted that some three-fifths of these Vietcong recruits could be regarded as volunteers or "soft-sell" enlistees. The common appeal in wide areas where Vietcong land reform was in effect was "The movement has given you land, give us your son."

Newsweek, on January 1, 1968, reported that 377,000 men were bearing arms against the United States and South Vietnamese forces, of whom only one-sixth were North Vietnamese. *The New York Times* on March 19, 1968, offered official estimates of all five categories of enemy strength, in which the North Vietnamese were said to play an even smaller role (See Table I).

Estimates made during my 1969 visit were that the North Vietnamese "main force" component was up, and that of southern recruits was down; on the local level southerners were still functioning in large numbers. The vitally important category of southern "cadres" or "V.C.I." (Vietcong infrastructure) had been somewhat depleted by the Communists' chosen tactics during *Tet*, but since then had hardly been touched. These V.C.I. do the recruiting, arrange the reconnaissance, obtain the porters and, by establishing supply and ammunition depots at intervals of about a day's march, prepare the way for main force actions—a *sine qua non* of these actions, since the main force units cannot carry with them the supplies and ammunition needed for their attacks. Moreover, despite well-reported "battles," it was doggedly, tragically true that over one-half of American casualties were the result of such essentially local guerrilla activities as the planting of mines and booby traps (and the mute silence of the villagers as they watched Americans walk into them).

The one bright spot in the picture was that fresh Vietcong recruitment had fallen to about 3,500 men a month, apparently through a combination of the loss of senior cadres at *Tet*, the spread of knowledge that main force units have been using southern recruits as the "first wave," and the first important stirrings of land reform under Nguyen Van Thieu, including an important effort to prevent landlords from returning to reclaim their lands in "pacified" villages.

The final part of this history—which was still undergoing almost daily changes as I was writing this—has involved the process by which the Thieu government appears, at last, and perhaps too late, to have embraced a really sweeping and workable program of land reform. The bizarre reality, of course, is that while the Communists have successfully billed themselves in Vietnam (and elsewhere) as “land reformers,” genuine democratic land reform does not take a back seat to Communist land reforms by any means. Quite the contrary: the collectivization which has been the universal “second stage” of Communist land reform promises that have led to successful revolutions has been an economic disaster vastly distasteful to the peasantry, while the half-dozen successful non-Communist land reforms of this century⁴ have led to major increases in agricultural production and have furnished a bulwark of political stability—including assistance in defeating attempts to start guerrilla movements in Bolivia and South Korea by depriving the would-be revolutionaries of their “gut” issue.

THIEU'S LAND REFORM PROGRAM

The first signs of real movement came from the South Vietnamese. President Thieu, speaking to a gathering of provincial land-affairs officials on January 18, 1968, just before the *Tet* offensive, had made the statement quoted at the beginning of this article.

Over the following months, the *Tet* offensive, the Johnson announcement of a bombing halt, the start of talks in Paris and the presidential campaign of Minnesota Senator Eugene McCarthy all supplied additional shocks to the Vietnamese, and major elements of a land reform program began to take shape.

First of all, distribution of the choice lands taken by Diem but never distributed began in earnest. Procedures were simplified with the help of United States land reform advisers so that village-level committees could approve the applications made by the present cultivators and hand out deeds in under a

week, and a tremendous boost was given the program when President Thieu decreed at the start of July, 1969, that henceforth the distribution would be free and that former recipients would be freed from their payment obligations. The distribution over the two years sharply accelerated:

TABLE II: LAND DISTRIBUTION, 1968–1969

January–June, 1968	20,000 acres distributed
July–December, 1968	40,000 " "
January–August, 1969	90,000 " "
September–December, 1969 (est.)	90,000 " "

In 1969, an estimated 50,000 families will receive these government-owned lands.

Second, a temporary end, at least, was brought to “negative land reform.” In September, 1968, Thieu declared that the processes by which landlords evicted occupants and collected rents in newly “secured” areas would be ended. Very likely, he had the forthcoming “accelerated pacification” drive in mind: if the process of planting the flag, at least in daytime, in additional villages, were to be accompanied by the customary inflow of returning landlords, the results for Saigon would be politically—and perhaps militarily—disastrous. This declaration was followed by three decrees:

One in November, 1968, that prohibited officials or soldiers in newly secured villages from reinstalling landlords or helping to collect rents;

A second in February, 1969, that extended the prohibition to the private landlords themselves and made it effective until February, 1970;

And a third in April, that made the earlier prohibitions countrywide, apparently in anticipation that landlords in more secure areas might try to evict tenants and resume personal occupation in contemplation of further land reform measures.

(Continued on page 367)

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⁴ In Mexico, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Bolivia and Iran, in that order, perhaps soon to be followed by Peru.

As United States policy focuses on "Vietnamizing" the war, the morale and combat efficiency of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) becomes an increasingly important factor. In this article, the author points out that "The hope is that overwhelming American firepower and material wealth, transferred to the Vietnamese, may be decisive. To critics, this policy is the perpetuation of an unjust war that could better be settled politically. To proponents, it is an opportunity to avoid a post-withdrawal defeat, to skirt the dangerous political jungles, and to attain—according to the most euphoric dreamers—the impossible dream of victory. To the historian, it has all happened before in Vietnam. That dream became a nightmare."

The ARVN: Prospects for the Army of South Vietnam

By PETER ARNETT

Associated Press Correspondent, Saigon

THE VIETNAMESE HAVE an incredibly greedy appetite for war. The year 1970 begins their fourth decade of virtually continuous conflict. One thousand people have died violently each week for the past three decades.¹

There have been slow months in these 30 years when a sort of dubious peace seemed to prevail across the land. But those few halcyon days have been sharply redressed by the frequent bloodlettings that have burst into newspaper headlines and exposed Vietnam as a raw nerve in the body politic of the world.

War has been sown in the lush paddyclfields by half a dozen foreign powers. Like the others who found a rationale to enter the Vietnam fray, the United States has reaped a substantial harvest of death and disarray. By late 1969, Washington was making it clear that military victory was not the American goal. The boys began going home.

But for Vietnam, the agony will undoubtedly

continue. Across the centuries, the Vietnamese have displayed an infinite capacity for waging war amongst themselves. The American presence has not been decisive. Its departure in the early 1970's promises only to reduce the scope of the war, not to end it. Vows from both sides to continue fighting already guarantee bloody conflict for possibly a decade more—the time some see necessary for final victory for one side or the other.

This bleak future could be forestalled by a negotiated settlement, yet little progress was visible in that direction as 1969 ended. The prospect is that the illnesses besetting Vietnam will be subjected to continued doses of the medicine dispensed liberally since the 1940's—namely, violence. In preparation for the struggle, the United States was arming the Vietnamese with a million rapid-firing M16 rifles. The Communists were similarly preparing.

A major aspect of the war scene that will differ in the decade ahead may well become the decisive difference. If the American public insists upon a complete withdrawal, the Vietnamese anti-Communist forces will be

¹ This figure is based on an estimate of 1,500,000 violent deaths in Vietnam since the Japanese occupation in the early 1940's. It includes civilian war victims and terror victims, and tends to be on the conservative side.

totally on their own. Only an incautious President would order American troops back in. Disillusion with the war within the United States was the one great victory scored by the Communists in their 1969 *Tet* offensive. The anti-Communists in Vietnam stood alone once before in the late 1950's and early 1960's. They fought and lost a war against the Vietcong insurgents. But at that time Uncle Sam was waiting in the wings.

Neither Uncle Sam nor anyone else is likely to rush to the rescue of a Saigon government a second time, and South Vietnam's President Nguyen Van Thieu and his supporters know it. He and the Americans who see Vietnam in terms of a pivotal struggle against world communism are attempting to delay the United States withdrawal if not indefinitely, then long enough to revitalize the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). They are racing not only time but history.

A SECOND CHANCE FOR ARVN

A second chance is a gift denied most losing armies, yet the Vietnamese are only reluctantly grasping the opportunity. They translate the currently popular Washington catchword "Vietnamize" as an eleventh hour bid by the United States to resolve an embarrassing situation that has American troops leaving a still contested battleground. The Saigon army is not cautious because of cowardice; while many of its 100,000 dead may have died foolishly, they died bravely enough. Neither are the Vietnamese ungrateful. They realize that United States policy in sacrificing 40,000 Americans to stem the Vietcong insurgency has caused disunity at home and disapprobation abroad. Yet for the Vietnamese, the dangers inherent in being left alone far outweigh their sympathy for the United States desire to get out. Saigon wants the United States to stay, of course, and watches bitterly as the withdrawal progresses.

Many powerful Americans still see the war in Vietnam as necessary and are in sympathy with the Saigon regime, if only because they grasp at this one route through which a debacle in Vietnam can be avoided. So "Vietnamization" was born; in their view, this was the

next best alternative to having American soldiers permanently based in Vietnam.

This policy will place an American gun into every willing hand, but it will be a Vietnamese hand. There will be enough battle fatigues, helmets and boots for all the Vietnamese who wish to wear them. They can have all the American helicopters they can fly and all the American tanks they can drive. There is a whole range of electronic gadgetry for the clever Vietnamese to play with, and bulldozers and trucks for the heavier-handed. The hope is that overwhelming American firepower and material wealth, transferred to the Vietnamese, may be decisive.

To critics, this display is the perpetuation of an unjust war that could better be settled politically. To proponents, it is an opportunity to avoid a post-withdrawal defeat, to skirt the dangerous political jungles, and to attain—according to the most euphoric dreamers—the impossible dream of victory. To the historian, it has all happened before in Vietnam. That dream became a nightmare.

THE BEGINNING OF U.S. INVOLVEMENT

The earlier stage was set in the Saigon of 1954, a city tremulous after the Vietminh victory over the French at Dienbienphu. United States envoys convinced a monastic Ngo Dinh Diem that only he could lead the south away from inevitable communism, and proceeded to construct an army around him. The suspicious Diem did not want too strong an army, fearing that it would dictate to him. He therefore channelled some of his manpower to paramilitary forces, creating a three-tiered security force each section of which reported to him but not to one another. This system preserved political disunity in the countryside because coordination at the village level did not exist.

The dictatorial Diem preferred this and reckoned operational chaos at the time a small price to pay for his continued political supremacy. A strong conventional army backed by a small navy and air force made up the chief line of defense, because Diem and his United States advisers agreed that the

major threat to South Vietnam's security would be an enemy invasion from North Vietnam.

Some observers believe that the creation of this ever-larger army was the greatest obstruction to any form of military progress in Vietnam at that time. The country was overloaded with armed forces it could not possibly support or pay, throwing the whole political, social and economic stability of the country out of balance. The very size of the army fomented political instability because political power rested with the military. This situation is still a reality today in spite of lip service to the democratic process.

The faults of early United States military planning in Vietnam are all too obvious now. The first eager military experts wanted a Vietnamese army that would be a duplicate of the American army. Nobody seemed to question the appropriateness of the conventional command structure that might have been right by French and American traditions but was demonstrably wrong for Vietnam. The regular army became an expeditionary force with the kind of branches—supply, military government and psywar (psychological warfare)—required when fighting outside a homeland, not in it.

The high command was encouraged to regard itself as an army of occupation in its own country, and tended to exempt itself from observing those rules and practices of war that protect enemy territories. Chickens, rice and women were casually pilfered by the soldiery. The army owed nothing to the local people, since its pay came out of United States aid like everything else, and not out of Vietnamese revenue. Government officials in the provinces were ordered around by the military.

U.S. TACTICAL ERRORS

Tactically, the Americans were fighting another war in another place, believing in the doctrine reaffirmed in Korea that armor and transportation should be the foundation of tactics. While the Vietcong guerrillas slithered through the paddies in shorts and san-

dals, the Vietnamese soldier would seek battle wearing his heavy American boots, his full pack, and his steel helmet, wallowing precariously in paddyfields and sweating through the long hot afternoons. Some United States experts did acknowledge a need for special tactics and trained a few special Ranger troops, but these were too few because the United States advisers were confident that this departure from the conventional would be only temporary, and that the enemy would soon have to fight on American terms.

There were also early American hopes that if the Vietnamese soldiers helped the peasant, he would be dissuaded from siding with the Communists. The effect was the opposite; the individual soldier lived off the peasants he was sent to woo. The army became a garrison force, much like the French garrisons that overlorded Vietnam before World War II.

The Vietcong swam in this sea of clumsiness like piranhas, slashing at moving columns from ambush and directing hit and run attacks against lonely outposts. As Vietcong morale puffed up, the Vietnamese army became disheartened because it was ill adapted to deal with the insurgents. Even when the coup d'etat that ousted President Diem gave the army supremacy late in 1963, there was no revolutionary change in its attitude towards the war and pacification. Bigger and more heavily equipped forces were created, and the Saigon leadership stalwartly promised to maintain uncompromising resistance to the Communists.

The Vietcong strategy was clever, but it was not crowned with easy victory. Still it did have many initial successes, which was not surprising. Unless the local Communist commander was sure of pulling it off without heavy losses, he would never begin an engagement. He always knew where the government forces were, giving him a continual advantage. Yet he was seen only when he wanted to be seen, the Vietnamese army rarely knowing who he was or where he was. Within a few years the local government garrisons were being made to look foolish and afraid. It was an easy matter after this for the Vietcong to awe the people close by.

The Vietcong storm gathered for several years. It broke over the tiny delta hamlet of Ap Bac in the first few hours of 1963 and, after the battle in which a small guerrilla force had beaten a strong Saigon army armored column, it became apparent that a new and more violent phase of the war was beginning. The Ap Bac rout illustrated plainly enough the manifold defects of the ARVN, but the United States High Command in Saigon was reluctant to do anything much about it. The American advisory maxim was "get along with your counterpart" and the few who rebelled and attempted to force necessary changes were quickly and permanently returned to the United States. This attitude prevailed even as it became apparent in 1964 that the political antics of the coup generals in Saigon, and the developing Vietcong fury, would together flush anti-Communist South Vietnam down the drain.

PROBLEMS FOR THE UNITED STATES

The United States, with its burgeoning involvement, was inheriting all the disadvantages of colonialism with none of its advantages. Unwilling to act as if it had the right to push its protégés around, the United States leadership also had cause to wonder whether reform and reequipping of the Vietnamese army would not ultimately benefit the enemy rather than improve the ARVN will and ability to fight. There was no certainty at the time that the country would not be lost in a Saigon political catastrophe. This uncertainty about the Vietnamese army was not resolved until after the *Tet* offensive of 1968 when President Lyndon Johnson decided that escalation had ended and that there would be no further increase in the number of American boys in Vietnam. The United States High Command in Saigon had no choice: the Vietnamese would have to do the job.

With this decision came belated "Vietnamization," a three-year, one-billion dollar program to make up the equipment deficiencies. It was only then that the Vietnamese troops received the high powered, rapid firing

M16 rifle, to replace their old carbines that had kept them inferior in firepower with regard to the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese for five years. Vietnamese divisions were traditionally equipped with one-third the artillery of United States infantry divisions, only one-quarter of the machineguns and one-tenth of the trucks and armor. These deficiencies began to be made up. This last minute haste was regarded ironically by many Vietnamese. South Vietnam's flamboyant Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky, who tends to polarize the extreme anti-Communists, complained that an earlier start on the plan would have allowed a lesser United States troop commitment in the first place, thereby avoiding the traumatic impact of massive American entry and withdrawal.

The American distrust of Vietnamese endurance was just one reason why "Vietnamization" failed to materialize earlier. A more compelling motive was that the United States Army thought it could do the job better, and welcomed the opportunity to deploy across the Vietnamese landscape. General William C. Westmoreland was convinced that the enemy would melt away once it felt the white heat of United States military determination, ground troops and firepower.

THE NORTH VIETNAMESE RESPONSE

The North Vietnamese response to the challenge by inch-worming infantry divisions down the Ho Chi Minh trail ruled out a quick defeat of the Vietcong. The war got bloodier. As American casualties mounted, the tendency of the ARVN to leave the main fighting to the United States units increased United States disenchantment with its ally, interpreting it as a distaste for combat. On the other hand, ARVN felt that it had been shoved aside by the Americans, forced to play a minor role in the developing drama because of inferior weaponry and equipment. While Vietnamese divisions would proceed sometimes for weeks without killing or even engaging the enemy, an American division operating alongside the Vietnamese would be accumulating kill counts each day.

THE TET OFFENSIVE

This American takeover of the war so alienated the population that the *Tet* offensive became inevitable. When attacks came against almost every population center in the country the American public was stunned into an awareness that the war was very far from over, despite the large sacrifice of blood. *Tet* was a two edged sword for the Communists. On the one hand, it was a strategic victory for them because it led to the American withdrawal. But it was also a series of tactical defeats for the Communists that troubles them to this day.

By enlisting every member of the Vietcong in the *Tet* attacks the Communists permitted the secret infrastructure in many areas to be laid to waste. And the battles in the cities did not endear the Communists to the city dwellers. By late 1969, it was obvious that the massive application of American firepower, while it had not won the war, had reshaped the problem. In military terms, some observers felt, if the Vietnam problem were still not solvable it might at least be controllable.

The best instrument to achieve these ends, according to the most knowledgeable Americans who analyzed the *Tet* affair, was not the conventional Vietnamese army but the neglected militia forces fighting in the villages where they were born. It was argued that strong local forces could prevent the reestablishment of the Vietcong, and the idea caught fire.

There are now so many of these regional and popular forces throughout Vietnam (nearly half a million) that a United States officer commented, "they don't have to do much, the Vietcong will just trip over them."

They don't do much, at that, but they do more than the People's Self Defense Forces which are envisaged as a Third Line of defense and comprise around one million women, youths and men past draft age who are unsalaried and carry hand-me-down weapons. While there is a much greater emphasis on the village war these days, the irresistible attraction is the Vietnamese regular army, mainly because President Diem was



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† Siam is now called Thailand.

INDOCHINA

eventually correct: there is a major threat of invasion from North Vietnam.

FEAR IN SAIGON

A dozen Communist divisions are strung out along Vietnam's borders, held back by American firepower and the knowledge that the American infantry may soon withdraw. A great fear in Saigon is that once the American barrier has been pulled away, the North Vietnamese will unleash a mighty attack that will carry all before it, crumbling the Vietnamese army and the hopes of the anti-Communist population. The ARVN is still just an improving army and not a winning one, still cronyish, corrupt and spotty, but the most knowledgeable observers do not see sudden disaster in its future. The North Vietnamese have 100,000 men along the borders, enough to prolong the agony of the war indefinitely but not enough for military victory unless the Vietnamese armed forces fall apart completely.

THE ARVN

Nearly one million Vietnamese are in uniform, 345,000 of them in the regular army. On any one day, 100,000 troops are in training, and by mid-1970 they will have 1,800 of their own helicopter pilots and numerous other flyers. Against this force, the North Vietnamese might score some victories, but there would be losses, too, as the record has already shown. The North Vietnamese came south mainly to meet the threat of the United States buildup. They can be expected to stay until the Vietcong can rebuild its infrastructure and influence across the country.

The test for the ARVN will be its endurance, its ability to keep its soldiers fighting against an enemy that has shown he is not afraid to die for his cause. Thirty years of war have made the desire for escape strong in the cannon fodder of both sides. More than 100,000 men have defected from the tightly-disciplined Communist units because the hardships became too great. Hundreds of thousands of young men have deserted the Vietnamese Army to return to the bosom of their families or the anonymity of the city—anywhere to escape almost inevitable death or maiming.

The Saigon combat divisions have to contend with a desertion rate of 50 per cent, some of those leaving because they have learned their wives have gone into prostitution to support the children, others because they are tired of the long, hot walks in the sun, and the crude facilities of the typical Vietnamese base camp.

The United States High Command is well aware that the Vietnamese army failed once before to meet the test and that it still retains many of the ingredients that led to that failure. The Saigon leadership is being exhorted to make hurried changes, but the changes come slowly. New spirit is hard to find; old habits are hard to break. The Vietnamese generals gained power through politics and not fighting ability and are not anxious to alter a generous system that permits them to share immense spoils. The permanent privates of the Vietnamese army get to share only each other's rice ration, but the lower

officers are grumbling with discontent because they wish to share more of the enormous financial rewards at the top.

In the past, this discontent has grown into coups d'état, and President Nguyen Van Thieu is conscious of the problem, having gained power that way himself. Consequently, he has spent much more time in office consolidating his power within the military than in developing his popularity. In many respects, he stands like the late President Diem, master of a house that might well stand the pressures from within but may topple on the shifting sands underneath.

The Communists are at an eight-to-one manpower disadvantage in the order of battle, and have been denied large areas of population to recruit from in the *Tet* aftermath. The departure of the powerful American presence will undoubtedly enable the Communists to reimpose their will over some lost areas immediately. Continued Iron Curtain aid will guarantee sufficient weaponry for further military adventures. While the Vietnamese people have shown an uncomplaining willingness to fight these past three decades of war, the continuing propulsion comes from a narrow group of extremist leaders on both sides for whom there is no middle way.

The broad mass of the Vietnamese population desires peace; there is no question about that. There will always be the possibility that the masses will declare a plague on both the houses and seek the middle course, despite the most vigorous objections of entrenched leadership. This middle course would probably be achieved only after more bloodshed. The prognosis for sick Vietnam as it enters its fourth decade of tumult, then, is for more of the same.

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"If the 1970's require greater self-reliance on the part of the Southeast Asian nations, it should be remembered that no nation in the area has been more self-reliant over a longer period of history than Thailand."

Thailand After Vietnam

BY RICHARD BUTWELL

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UNITED STATES Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has long feared that Thailand might become "a second Vietnam," a fear that various of his countrymen have also expressed. It is a fear shared by Thailand's leaders—many of whom, however, believe that the efforts of Senator Fulbright (D., Ark.) and others make it more likely that their nation may some day share the sad fate of battered South Vietnam. The Thai seek United States protection to prevent their country from becoming "another Vietnam," while some Americans today are trying to make sure that a growing United States commitment to Thailand does not result in a repetition of the American experience in Vietnam.

For nearly 20 years, under three different governments, the Thai have sought to increase the United States commitment to the defense of Thailand. They have been extremely successful. From a fairly modest \$7 million in military aid in 1950, the United States defense contribution to Thailand increased by 1968 to \$292 million annually, a more than 40-fold growth.¹ The Thai were delighted with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' sponsorship of SEATO in 1954. By

1962, they were able to persuade Secretary of State Dean Rusk to agree to the bilateralization of the Thai-United States defense relationship within SEATO, in a memorandum Rusk issued jointly with his counterpart, Thanat Khoman. In the 1962 memorandum, Rusk agreed that the United States would not be deterred from fulfilling its SEATO defense obligation to Thailand even if SEATO failed to act collectively.

The subsequent 1965 Thai-American "contingency plan" was embodied in a 400-page document signed by Thailand's Premier Thanom Kittikachorn and United States Major General Richard G. Stillwell, then commanding United States forces in Thailand. It provided for the possibility of at least nominal Thai command of United States forces in Thailand and for the possible occupation by such forces of parts of neighboring Laos in the event of Communist operations from that country.²

Public discussion of the Thai-United States defense relationship has often left the impression that the Bangkok government has exclusively taken the lead in attempting to commit the United States to its defense. Certainly, Thailand did seek the 1962 Rusk-Thanat agreement, having been disillusioned by SEATO's failure to act in the 1961 Laotian crisis.³ And the Thai pressed for the 1965 contingency plan which figured so prominently in the mid-1969 debate between President Richard Nixon's administration

¹ See the excellent summary article by James G. Driscoll in *National Observer*, August 25, 1969.

² *Ibid.*

³ See Bernard B. Fall, *Anatomy of a Crisis: The Laotian Crisis of 1960-61* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1969).

and various of its congressional critics. However, the 1962 Rusk-Thanat pact was part of the Thai price for the increased vulnerability the Bangkok government assumed when it agreed to allow the stationing of United States forces on its soil (which it had refused to do earlier). Likewise, the 1965 contingency plan—which was no more than that—was designed to compensate Thailand for allowing United States airbases (ultimately six in number) on her soil and for permitting B-52 aircraft to operate from such bases against targets in both North and South Vietnam and, subsequently, in Laos. That United States military objectives *should* have paralleled those of the Thai, as Americans saw the strategic situation, is often confused with the belief (not necessarily the fact) that they were Thai objectives.

REACTION TO NIXON POLICY

The September, 1969, talks between Thailand and the United States regarding the departure of United States forces from Thailand grew directly out of the Thai concern for the country's security after the end of the war in Vietnam. Most of the 49,200 United States servicemen in Thailand in mid-1969 were engaged in air action against the Communists in Vietnam and Laos. United States President Richard M. Nixon's announcement of the withdrawal of the first 25,000 United States forces from Vietnam (discussed beforehand with the Thanom government) and the President's emphasis on a future "low visibility" military posture in Southeast Asia disappointed the Thai leadership, which had welcomed Nixon's election in 1968 in anticipation that he would follow a harder line in Vietnam than did Lyndon B. Johnson in the last half year of his administration.

Senator Fulbright's opposition to expanded military aid to Thailand on the grounds that such aid would lead to "another Vietnam" greatly annoyed the Bangkok government; nonetheless, Fulbright's was an opposition

voice. Defense Secretary Melvin Laird's August 21, 1969, statement that the Nixon administration did not feel bound by the 1965 contingency plan was a different matter. Laird was the President's top civilian defense adviser, not a congressional critic. The Nixon administration appeared to be wavering on the subject of the President's public statement in Bangkok in July that "the United States will stand proudly" against those who "might threaten" Thailand "from abroad or within." During his mid-1969 trip to Southeast Asia, President Nixon had promised the Thai increased military assistance. But Thanat wondered whether the President would honor his promise in view of congressional fears that such help would lead the United States into "another Vietnam." On August 22, Thai Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman called for talks on the withdrawal of United States forces from his country.⁴ The talks began on September 1.

Most pointedly, Thanat suggested "an immediate evacuation so there is no opportunity for United States forces to be used to fight subversive activities launched by the Communists against Thailand."⁵ The Americans and the Thai subsequently and quickly agreed that there would be no withdrawal of United States combat forces from Thailand that would in any way diminish the war effort in Vietnam.

Thanat's call for talks on the withdrawal of United States forces from Thailand was partly designed to remind the United States that the Thai—not colonized in the heyday of European colonialism—were masters in their own house and controlled their own foreign policy. In August, 1969, that control seemed to be diminishing. Secretary Laird seemed to be saying that the Nixon administration was not bound by the commitments of its predecessors, and could change the terms of the Thai-United States defense relationship unilaterally. The Thai were not so independent as they had thought they were, and the Thanom government and its articulate foreign minister, Thanat, were not pleased.

Although the withdrawal talks passed

⁴ *The New York Times* dispatch in the *Herald-Tribune* (Paris), August 30-31, 1969.

⁵ *Bangkok Post*, August 24, 1969.

without incident in September and the Thai agreed that United States forces involved in the prosecution of the war in Vietnam should remain in the country, there was still considerable resentment over the apparently unilateral way in which the Americans seemed to be trying to liquidate the war in Vietnam. President Nixon's September 17, 1969, announcement of a further withdrawal of 35,000 United States forces from Vietnam (making a total withdrawal of 60,000) was not communicated beforehand to the Thanom government. The Bangkok response was a sharp reminder that Thailand was a United States ally and that allies ordinarily consult with one another on such matters.⁶ The Thai also objected in early September to the brief bombing halt that followed the death of North Vietnamese President Ho Chi Minh. It was apparently felt in Bangkok that the very brevity of the bombing halt was suggestive of a certain indecisiveness in the United States approach to Vietnam and, inferentially, towards the rest of Southeast Asia.⁷

THE MILITARY FUTURE

The Thai want a modest number of United States forces to remain in their country after the war ends in Vietnam—but not to fight local insurrectionists in the northern and northeastern parts of the nation. Premier Thanom has stated specifically that the Thai will not ask the United States to commit forces to an “insurgent war.”⁸ But the Thai see no reason to believe that the Communist Vietnamese will desist from aggressive behavior in the future any more than they have in the past. Thailand is worried that the war in adjacent Laos will spill over into Thailand (as in a sense it already has in the form of the insurgency in the northeast). The United States was sufficiently concerned about Laos in mid-1969 to dispatch 12,500 bombing flights a month against Communist-

held territory in Laos from bases in Thailand.⁹ A few Thai preferred to write off Laos altogether, but these did not include the leading members of the ruling elite. The leadership group feared that Laos might fall completely to the Communists since the Pathet Lao and its North Vietnamese allies controlled more than half the country in late 1969. Thailand might be able to hold her own against Laotian or even joint Lao-Communist Vietnamese assaults, but Foreign Minister Thanat stated publicly in September, 1969, that his country would require help from major powers in the event of all-out aggression.

Thailand's military position vis-à-vis outside powers is vulnerable, and her leaders realize this. It is also a dependent posture, and this they also know. Thailand has long and inadequately patrolled frontiers that could be easily penetrated in various areas. The Communists are already too close for comfort in Laos, and in the north only a fragile sliver of Laos separates Thailand from the People's Republic of China, whose foreign minister predicted the uprising in the northeast two years before it occurred. One thousand Malaysian Communist party refugees are hiding in the thick jungles of southern peninsular Thailand across the border from Malaysia, the site of vicious Malay-Chinese racial rioting in the capital city of Kuala Lumpur in mid-May, 1969. Renewed Communist violence is possible in Malaysia* in view of widespread Chinese bitterness and frustration, and the historic Chinese composition of the Malaysian Communist party may lead to a new civil war across Thailand's southern border, with M.C.P. elements in lower Thailand operating from Thai soil. The recent deterioration of security conditions in eastern Burma could mean that in the very near future Thailand may face foes on all three of her land frontiers.

The Thai are vulnerable in other ways. Although industrialization is proceeding at an impressive pace, the country is still dependent on external sources, primarily the United States, for aircraft, arms and other war supplies. The kind of war the Thai are likely

⁶ *Bangkok World*, September 17, 1969.

⁷ *Bangkok Post*, September 15, 1969.

⁸ See Driscoll, *op. cit.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

**Ed. note:* See the article on Malaysia on pp. 351 ff. of this issue.

to have to fight in the future—the kind they are now fighting in the northeast—requires equipment, such as helicopters, and skills and training they do not now possess in abundance. Many of the peoples on the peripheries of the country, moreover—from the Malays in the south to the Meo tribesmen in the north—have no strong loyalties to the central government or to such traditional Thai symbols as Buddhism or the throne. On the contrary, they do have bonds with like peoples on the other side of the country's frontiers. How Thailand fares militarily after the war ends in Vietnam will depend in large measure on how the government compensates for these vulnerabilities.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS

The Thai leadership—especially Premier Thanom and the army commander, General Praphas Charusathein—does not welcome President Nixon's attempt to shift much of the burden for defending Asia to Asians. On the other hand, Thanat and others of the ruling group have long favored closer relations among the various Southeast Asian lands. Thailand, a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in 1967 as well as of the predecessor Association of Southeast Asia in 1961 and SEATO in 1954, may be expected to seek to strengthen ties with such countries as Indonesia and the Philippines after the war ends in Vietnam in an effort to bring new stability to troubled Southeast Asia. Thanat does not favor the regional military pact proposed by Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman. The Thai foreign minister told correspondents in Bangkok in September that any future security grouping for the area must be primarily political, economic and social in character, not military.¹⁰

At various times Thailand has shown an interest in improved, if not close, relations with Communist China. The Thai expressed

such a view at the annual foreign ministers' meetings of the Asian and Pacific Council in Tokyo in the spring of 1969. If only China would sit down at the same table with the other states of Asia, Foreign Minister Thanat has said, this could mark the beginning of a "new Bandung spirit."¹¹

At the last occasion on which the "Bandung spirit" was invoked, however—at the tenth anniversary of the historic Bandung Conference in Jakarta in 1956—Thanat walked out of the obviously pro-Communist propaganda gathering.¹² Moreover, Thanat himself may not remain much longer as Thailand's ranking foreign policy architect. After 11 difficult years of responsibility for his country's relations with other nations, the skillful diplomat has expressed a feeling of weariness and an interest in resigning his present post in exchange for a World Court judgeship.¹³ When Thanat does step aside, it should be quickly apparent how much of Thai foreign policy has been his creation, and how deep the elite support for that policy runs.

There is probably no real likelihood of a Thai departure from the 20-year-old policy of close cooperation with the United States. The trend is towards anti-communism in many countries of Southeast Asia—not least of all in such important states as Indonesia and Burma. There is, moreover, no other state likely to pick up the bill to maintain the level of military and economic assistance which the United States has financed in the last two decades.

Foreign aid, on the other hand, may be in the process of being phased out in the United States. There are also indications that even the less vulnerable United States foreign-military assistance program may be cut back in the 1970's. Too rapid an American disengagement from South Vietnam could shake Thailand's weakened faith in United States willingness to stick it out in Southeast Asia. Likewise, the Thai will be watching the role of the United States in the so-called "forgotten war" in Laos. Thailand was none too eager to send her forces to Vietnam. The first Thai units reached there in Sep-

¹⁰ *Bangkok World*, September 11, 1969.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² The author was present on this occasion and personally witnessed Thanat's walkout.

¹³ Louis Halasz, "Khoman Wants Out," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 28, 1969, p. 529.

tember, 1967, and the full pledged complement of 12,000 men was reached only in February, 1969.¹⁴

LIBERALIZATION VERSUS COUPS

Politically, the years after the war ends in Vietnam may see some surprises in Thailand. The present Thanom government is not an elected one, and there is as yet no parliamentary means whereby it can be turned out of office. The constitution proclaimed in June, 1968, provided for the election of only one house of the national legislature, with the executive in no way technically responsible to the Parliament. The United Thai People's party, which made the strongest single party showing in the February, 1969, voting (the first national election in more than a decade), is not really a ruling party. It is a partially successful device designed primarily to legitimize the military regime. Dissent within the party has already developed, and one member has resigned.¹⁵ The Democratic party, which swept all the seats in the capital area in the February balloting, has started to seek changes in the constitution and has secured support from some other opposition and independent elements. The Democrats would like to make the Cabinet responsible to the legislature.¹⁶

Many observers of the Thai political scene predict the replacement of the pro-liberalization Thanom Kittikachorn government by another coup, led by strongman General Praphas, in the event that the legislature gets out of control and tries to unseat the government or threatens its budget. This is certainly the old Thai way of doing things. But 1969 (or 1970 or 1971) is not 1947 or 1958, and Vietnam has provided a rather painful illustration of what happens when a regime loses the support of the people. This is one reason why Prime Minister Thanom pushed so hard for the 1968 constitution and the ensuing elections, despite the objection of General Praphas.

If, in the 1970's, Thailand experiences still another military coup, and still another turning back of the political clock, the viability of soldier-controlled politics in the country could be dramatically reduced. In the long run, the trend is in favor of a further modification of military-manned government in Thailand. Premier Thanom clearly realizes this, which is why he favored the new constitution and elections and why he has recently talked of stepping down as head of the pro-government United Thai People's party.¹⁷ Thanom himself, however, was not strong enough to control discordant and frequently unruly political forces in 1958. He was then acting as caretaker Premier in the absence from the country of the former strongman and Prime Minister, Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat. Thanom's successor, whoever he may be, may have the same difficulty, particularly if General Praphas is waiting in the wings.

The main props of state authority in Thailand are likely to remain the country's popular monarch and royal family, and Buddhism, the nation's religious faith. To these traditional elements a consensual base may be added if Thailand can continue on her current moderately liberalizing course. The army and civil service have been the backbone of Thai politics for more than a generation now, and the time is probably ripe for the partnership's expansion to include more members of the new (and by no means wholly Chinese) business elite as well as the mass of the population through their elected repre-

(Continued on page 368)

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¹⁴ "Exit the Panthers?" *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 28, 1969, p. 520.

¹⁵ *Bangkok Post*, September 15, 1969.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Bangkok Post*, September 14, 1969.

"Throughout 1969, Sihanouk persisted in his customary strategy of survival, conditioned in part by an unshakable animosity toward Bangkok and Saigon, by a distrust of United States interests in Southeast Asia, and by the fact that his tactics have succeeded thus far."

Cambodia's Strategy of Survival

BY DAVID CHANDLER

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AT HIS PRESS conference of July 2, 1969, United States Secretary of State William Rogers announced that diplomatic relations between Cambodia and the United States had been restored. Over four years had passed since they had been broken off, at Cambodia's insistence, in retaliation for violations of Cambodia's borders by United States military forces stationed in South Vietnam. Secretary Rogers saw the restoration, publicly at least, as "a positive step, looking toward peace in Southeast Asia," but Cambodia's chief of state, Prince Norodom Sihanouk, interpreted the move more prosaically in terms of Cambodia's immediate national interests.¹

For centuries, Cambodia's survival has been bound up with the behavior of her immediate neighbors, Thailand and Vietnam, and her foreign policy has concentrated on containing the territorial ambitions of these two states. To accomplish this before the French arrived in 1863, the Cambodian court employed two strategies. In the 1820's and the 1850's, Cambodia became a "two-headed bird," formally paying tribute to both the Thai and the Vietnamese courts. In the 1830's and the 1840's, she played one neighbor's military and political forces off against the other's—a dangerous game, for the playground was Cambodia

herself. Under both approaches, the Cambodian court forfeited a good deal of independence; in the 1830's, in fact, most of Cambodia was administered directly by Vietnam.

After 90 years of being sealed off by the French from international relations (who also quarantined Laos and Vietnam), Cambodia emerged into independence in the mid-1950's with her historically-conditioned animosities intact. She found Thailand and the new state of South Vietnam firmly aligned with the United States. Prince Sihanouk, who assumed direct control of his government in 1955, soon felt himself swept up into the dialectic of the cold war; he was caught, as he has often said, "between the hammer and the anvil." He swiftly chose a neutral stance, hoping to avoid warfare with his pro-Western neighbors on the one hand and a smothering military alliance with them on the other. Seeking "unconditional" foreign assistance, he linked Cambodia's neutrality with her independence from the policies of Bangkok and Saigon, which he regarded as "puppets" of the United States.

Since the early 1960's, Sihanouk has bypassed face-to-face dealings with his neighbors. Instead, he has resorted to what can be seen historically as a third strategy; he has sought formal declarations of support from other powers: from Communist China, for example, and France, and most recently from the United States. In the early 1960's, Sihan-

¹ Throughout this paper, I have assumed Cambodia's national interests to be those her leaders say they are.

ouk asked other nations to support his call for an international conference summoned to neutralize the states of former French Indochina—a cause which the deterioration of the United States position in Vietnam has led him to abandon.²

Since 1966, the prince has concentrated instead on seeking pledges to “recognize and respect” Cambodia’s “present frontiers.”³ Sihanouk’s eagerness to freeze his boundaries regardless of the outcome of the war in Vietnam is understandable. But given the arbitrary way in which these frontiers were drawn by the French, it is not difficult to understand the refusal of the Thai, Lao and South Vietnamese regimes to agree to this. North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front, however, have not hesitated to support Sihanouk. Until 1969, when its resumption of relations with Cambodia was keyed to a presidential declaration expressing “recognition and respect”⁴ of Cambodia’s frontiers, the United States deferred to its Southeast Asian allies on the issue, reluctant to judge a question which from their point of view remained unsettled. The neighbors’ refusal to sign, and the United States’ scrupulosity, have

been interpreted in Cambodia as proof that Thailand, Laos and South Vietnam wish to reenact nineteenth century history and swallow up Cambodia.

Sihanouk also fears that the North Vietnamese and the N.L.F., by their increasing infiltration, are seeking to repeat the tactics of the Vietminh (the pro-Communist Vietnam Independence League) in 1953-1954, when guerrilla forces occupied portions of Cambodia in order to increase Vietminh bargaining power at the subsequent Geneva Conference of 1954. Sihanouk is irrevocably opposed to granting the Vietnamese a voice in Cambodia’s future at any conference convened to settle the war in Vietnam. His stance is complicated, however, by his recent complaints that North Vietnamese and N.L.F. troops are stationed in parts of eastern Cambodia at a level of 40,000, and exercise *de facto* political control.⁵

Caught between his long-standing recognition of the N.L.F. as the “legitimate representative of the Vietnamese people” and his eagerness to suspend N.L.F. infiltration, Sihanouk has taken several steps consistent with his conception of neutrality. In June of 1969, assured of resuming relations with the United States, Sihanouk suspended relations with Bonn, remarking jocularly at the time that the United States would “take West Germany’s place.”⁶ Subsequently, he accepted the United States’ declaration of support. Then, late in June, he welcomed the President of the provisional revolutionary government of South Vietnam, Huynh tan Phat, on an official visit to Cambodia.⁷ Phat emphasized that this was his first visit in an official capacity, and extended renewed assurances regarding Cambodia’s frontiers, which in fact N.L.F. troops were violating at will.⁸

Sihanouk’s search for declarations is bound up with his perceptions of the course of the war in Vietnam and the apparent modifications of United States ends and means in Southeast Asia. Sihanouk believes that United States disengagement from Vietnam is inevitable and is convinced, in his public statements at least, that the Saigon govern-

² See Sihanouk’s conversation with Robert Garry, reported in *Kambuja Monthly Review*, Vol. V, No. 46 (January 15, 1969), p. 13.

³ For a discussion of Cambodia’s frontiers with Laos and Vietnam, see Sarin Chhak, *Les Frontières du Cambodge* (Paris: Librairie Dallos, 1966), and Charles Meyer, “Cambodia’s Frontiers are Firm,” *Kambuja Monthly Review*, Vol. V, No. 51 (June 15, 1969), p. 14. For a discussion of Sihanouk’s search for declarations, see Robert Shaplen, *Time Out of Hand* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), pp. 332-333.

⁴ *The New York Times*, April 13, 1969. On April 15, the newspaper referred to the pledge as a “vague but useful gesture,” phraseology which led Sihanouk to suspend negotiations with the United States throughout most of May.

⁵ *Ibid.*, October 17, 1969.

⁶ *Ibid.*, June 4, 1969. The Bonn government, enraged by an official visit by Cambodia’s foreign minister to East Berlin, had previously withdrawn its ambassador from Phnom Penh. For the notion of “replacement,” see Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report*, June 11, 1969.

⁷ Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report*, July 1, 1969.

⁸ A week before, Sihanouk had announced that the “Vietnamese Communists” had agreed, “formally and in writing,” to withdraw from Cambodia following the cessation of hostilities in Vietnam. See *The New York Times*, June 22, 1969.

ment will disintegrate as quickly as American troops depart. His experiences with previous Saigon regimes, however, and his difficulties with the N.L.F. have led him to believe that any South Vietnamese government will feel a compulsion to absorb Cambodian land. For this reason, he has been assiduous in his search for declarations of support from the eventual "winners" in Vietnam, and has also sought a stronger, more impartial patron.

For many years, Sihanouk cast Communist China in this role, but China's image was locally tarnished by her involvement in the Cambodian disorders of 1967.⁹ Thereafter, Sihanouk looked to France, and particularly to President Charles de Gaulle, whose resignation Sihanouk publicly lamented. Although he has no intention of becoming a United States protege, his opening toward the "blues," as he calls the Western bloc, is traceable partly to his nervousness about the Vietnamese, his disappointment with China, and his continuing search for a reliable, undemanding patron able to guarantee Cambodia against Thailand and Vietnam.¹⁰

But patronage, formal declarations and diplomatic moves, no matter how skillfully they are combined, cannot of themselves deflect the kinds of pressure which Cambodia (along with much of the "third world") may face in the near future. As Sihanouk is quick but unhappy to realize, not all the pressures—demographic, political, economic—originate outside Cambodia's frontiers. Indeed, factors other than Sihanouk's fear of his neighbors seem to have played a part in his choice to resume relations with the United States. These include Cambodia's

increasing requirements for foreign exchange to finance economic development, the inability of her slow-moving agricultural economy to provide sufficient funds for the national budget, the gradual emergence of an intelligentsia for whom jobs are simply not available, and Sihanouk's growing conviction that the "reds" inside Cambodia, as well as the "blues" outside, seek to subvert his regime.

A COLONIAL ECONOMY

Cambodia's economy is "colonial" in structure and the prisoner of its geographic setting.¹¹ Cambodia has few minerals and a generally poor soil, and is afflicted with the excesses of both the rainfall and drought associated with a monsoon climate. Thus she lacks many of the essentials for economic development and is colonial in the sense that her exports are overwhelmingly agricultural, while she needs to import nearly all her manufactured goods—especially cloth—despite recent steps to develop an industrial sector.¹²

Cambodia's average population density—approximately 100 per square mile—is deceptive, since 80 per cent of the population of approximately 7 million is concentrated for historical reasons in those parts of the country which have the least productive soil.¹³ Near Kompong Cham, for example, densities of 600 people per square mile frequently occur. The population is young—more than half of it is under 20—and overwhelmingly rural: only 12 per cent inhabit towns with populations larger than 10,000. Urbanization is limited to the capital, Phnom Penh, which contains 10 per cent of Cambodia's population.

Per capita income is estimated at \$130 (U.S.) per year, about the same as Thailand's. Personal income, however, is distributed more evenly throughout the population than is the case, for example, in either Thailand or South Vietnam. Cambodia, like her neighbors, is dominated by agriculture, and more specifically by the cultivation of irrigated and flooded rice. Over two million Cambodians between the ages of 15 and 60—the equivalent of two-thirds of the

⁹ See Michael Liefer, "Rebellion or Subversion in Cambodia?" *Current History*, February, 1969, pp. 88-93, and Bernard K. Gordon, "Cambodia: Shadow over Angkor," *Asian Survey*, January, 1969, pp. 58-68.

¹⁰ In September, 1969, Sihanouk attended Ho Chi Minh's funeral in Hanoi; he was the only chief of state to do so.

¹¹ Much of the material which follows is drawn from Remy Prud'homme, *L'Economie du Cambodge* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), a penetrating analysis.

¹² *The New York Times*, January 17, 1969.

¹³ Jean Delvert, *Le paysan cambodgien* (Paris: Mouton, 1962), pp. 305ff.

country's active population—are engaged in rice farming, and produce an annual harvest of slightly more than 2 million metric tons. Of this total, some 300,000 tons are exported; rice constitutes Cambodia's steadiest export and her most reliable source of foreign exchange. Since 1966, however, large quantities of rice have been illicitly exported into South Vietnam and paid for in Cambodian *riels*, reducing foreign exchange and the surplus of rice available for export.¹⁴

Cambodian rice yields are low—less than one metric ton per hectare. Fertilizers are not widely used, and the acreage under rice is only expanding at the same rate as Cambodia's population, so that the size of the exportable surplus (without considering the drain in illicit trade) will probably remain much the same for several years. The market for Cambodia's second major export, rubber, is declining slightly, although the rubber produced on the French-administered Cambodian plantations is competitive on the world market.

Efforts to expand and diversify Cambodia's exports (rice and rubber make up two-thirds of them, by value) have not been successful, although the government has had some success in curbing imports. Consumer requirements for cloth and pharmaceuticals, however, cannot be met by local industry, and imports currently exceed exports by the equivalent of \$10 million (U.S.) per year.¹⁵

Given this state of affairs, the Cambodian government has had to seek sources of income other than foreign trade to finance domestic requirements, which include heavy outlays for education, communications and public health. Indeed, since independence, ex-

penditures have always exceeded receipts. Until the mid-1960's, this deficit was informally covered by foreign military and economic assistance programs, especially those of the United States, but the latter were terminated at Sihanouk's request in 1964. Insisting that aid be "unconditional," Sihanouk has maintained that membership in such bodies as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, dominated by the "blues," was inconsistent with Cambodia's neutrality. The money shortage became serious in 1967, and Cambodia's second five year plan, scheduled to commence in that year, was barely begun in 1968.¹⁶ Schemes to increase the number of tourists in Cambodia and to create a free trade zone at the port of Sihanoukville were efforts to cope with the problem, as was Sihanouk's decision, in the autumn of 1968, to seek a rapprochement with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank.

A more significant economic step was taken in September, 1969, when Cambodia announced a 12.5 per cent devaluation of the currency, the *riel*, whose official value had remained unchanged (alone of the "Indo-chinese" currencies) since independence. The move allowed the *riel* greater convertibility, with a view to satisfying I.M.F. requirements relating to the currencies of member states.

Sihanouk's recent search for long-term capital investment from the "blues," and the steps he has taken to encourage it, should not be construed as a willingness to resume the kinds of military and economic programs under which the United States aided Cambodia in her first years of independence. Sihanouk's moves hardly represent a significant "shift to the right"; rather, they constitute a tactical adjustment consonant with Sihanouk's long term goals.

Of course, the moves may well have the effect of rallying dissident Cambodian "blues" to Sihanouk's regime, including members of the clandestine *Khmer Serei* (Free Cambodia) movement.¹⁷ They certainly reflect the continuous influence on Sihanouk's think-

¹⁴ Prud'homme, *op. cit.* page 255, Table 12, note a, and Sihanouk's talk with William Attwood, reprinted (from *Look*, April 2, 1968) in *Kambuja Monthly Review*, April 15, 1968, p. 15. Trade with the N.L.F. is legal, but Sihanouk stated to Attwood that "90 per cent" of the trade in rice was conducted through clandestine channels.

¹⁵ Prud'homme, *op. cit.*, p. 273, table 51. Total trade amounts generally to the equivalent of \$200 million (U.S.). Prud'homme, however, believes these statistics to be of dubious quality.

¹⁶ *Far Eastern Economic Review 1969 Yearbook* (Hong Kong: 1969), p. 123.

¹⁷ See *Kambuja Monthly Review*, February 15, 1969, p. 34.

ing of his comparatively "blue" and unquestionably loyal senior advisers, like Nhiek Tiouloung and Penn Nouth, who have worked closely with Sihanouk for over 20 years.

Conversely, the disturbances of 1967, which revealed to Sihanouk the extent of Communist influence within Cambodia—especially among segments of the administrative elite—made the advice of these elder statesmen ring truer than the declarations of innocence hastily provided by China and North Vietnam. Although Sihanouk was quick to deny that the disturbances had any internal causes,¹⁸ he realized the implications of the fact that 20,000 young Cambodians are now enrolled in universities and technical schools, from which there is little hope that they will move into meaningful and rewarding jobs.

The prince has frequently stated that Cambodia is "not ready" for a multiparty system of government, and indeed the country's political institutions, such as the national political organization, the *Sangkum Reastr Niyum* (People's Socialist Community) are largely of Sihanouk's own making, and are held together by his charisma.¹⁹ By repeatedly emphasizing that Cambodians are uninterested in "foreign" ideologies, Sihanouk is banking on the innate conservatism of most Cambodians, which he probably shares. At the same time, the massive educational efforts his government has made automatically tend to free Cambodia's young from the kind of conservatism associated with an isolated Cambodian village.

Cambodia's restoration of diplomatic relations with the United States seems to have been related more closely to her need for free world capital investment than to a clear-cut political shift on the part of the kingdom's leaders, although the influence of leftists in Sihanouk's entourage has declined sharply since 1967. At the same time, Prince

Sihanouk's increasing pessimism about the future of Southeast Asia and about the ultimate intentions of any Vietnamese regime towards his country may have encouraged him to decide to repair relations with the United States, which itself was asked—by means of the border declaration—to pay the political costs of the resumption. Throughout 1969, Sihanouk persisted in his customary strategy of survival, conditioned in part by an unshakable animosity toward Bangkok and Saigon, by a distrust of United States interests in Southeast Asia, and by the fact that his tactics have succeeded thus far.

At this point, it is permissible to ask: What next?

In the first place, Sihanouk himself, at 47, shows no signs of relinquishing executive power. He has held the reins in one form or another for 28 years, despite understandable outbursts of depression and fatigue such as overtook him in July, 1969, when his resignation was prematurely reported by the world press.²⁰ Likewise, the short-term future of his senior advisers appears to be secure, although continuing acquiescence to them on the part of young officials is not so certain. Mass education, rising expectations and the ideologies and methods of revolutionary warfare are relatively new to Cambodia, and may soon release social forces with which Sihanouk and his generally paternal style of government will be poorly equipped to deal. In 1969, Sihanouk attempted once again to purchase time for his country, while forfeiting as little independence and relinquishing as little of his own executive power as possible. His overall strategy remains as he described it late in 1967:

The objective we have set ourselves is that of remaining safe and sound for as long as possible, and of retarding the onset of the catastrophe with

(Continued on page 366)

¹⁸ *Kambuja Monthly Review*, November 15, 1968, p. 136.

¹⁹ See Milton E. Osborne, "Beyond Charisma: Princely Politics and the Problem of Political Succession in Cambodia," *International Journal*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (Winter 1968-69), pp. 109-21 for an astute analysis of this particular problem.

²⁰ *The New York Times*, August 2, 1969.

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"The belief that 4.5 million Malays can dominate 3.5 million Chinese and 1 million Indians forever and assimilate them culturally is an impossible dream. . . . It is to be hoped that the spirit of racial toleration that has long existed in [Malaysia] will influence her leaders to take the path of cooperation and progress toward a free, democratic society. . . ."

Crisis in Malaysia

BY GERALD P. DARTFORD

Author of *A Short History of Malaysia*

MALAYSIA IS A federation of the 11 states of Malaya on the mainland of Southeast Asia which became independent of Britain on August 31, 1957, and the two former British colonies of Sabah (British North Borneo) and Sarawak on the northwest coast of Borneo, which joined with Malaya and Singapore to form Malaysia on September 16, 1963. The island of Singapore, whose two million people are mostly Chinese, was expelled from Malaysia on August 9, 1965, and is now a separate republic. Of the total 1969 Malaysian population of 10 million, some 8.5 million live in the states of Malaya (now known as West Malaysia) and about 1.5 million in the two Bornean states (East Malaysia), separated by 400 miles of the South China Sea. Malaysia is naturally dominated by its western division which is not only more populous but also far more developed. Sabah and Sarawak, both politically and economically more primitive, depend heavily on assistance from West Malaysia.

With ten million people in an area a little larger than New Mexico, Malaysia seems small when compared to her neighbors, Indonesia (115 million), Thailand (32 million) and Burma (26 million), but her strategic position and her relatively high stage of development have given her an importance beyond her size. For a long period West Malaysia and Singapore have enjoyed a

higher per capita standard of living than any other Asian country except Japan. Good progress has been maintained since independence, and Malaysia's prosperity has been accompanied by remarkable political stability, the success of democratic institutions, and an efficient administrative machine inherited from the British regime.

No race in Malaysia has a clear majority of the population. Even in West Malaysia the native Malays comprise a little less than half of the people, and the Chinese and Indians a little more than half. Only in the less developed states like Kedah, Kelantan, Trengganu and Pahang do Malays have a large majority. In the most populous and developed states of Perak, Selangor and Johore, Malays and Chinese are practically equal in numbers, and all along the west coast they are inextricably mixed in their distribution. In Malaysia as a whole, the racial composition is roughly 4.5 million Malays, 3.5 million Chinese, 1 million Indians, and 1 million Borneans. Dyaks predominate in Sarawak, and Dusuns and Bajaus in Sabah. In both of the Bornean states the Chinese minority is larger than the Malay minority.

For 12 years the key to Malaysian stability and progress has been the policy of racial cooperation under the Alliance government, headed by Tunku Abdul Rahman as Prime Minister and composed of the United Malays

National Organization (U.M.N.O.), the Malayan Chinese Association (M.C.A.) and the Malayan Indian Congress (M.I.C.). Even before independence, the Alliance won 51 out of 52 elected seats in the Legislative Council. Its majority was maintained in the national elections held in 1959 and 1964. The elections in May, 1969, were a setback, but the Alliance still holds a working majority and a mandate for five years of power. The record of Malaysia has therefore been the measure of the achievements of the Alliance government.

Three areas have been of special concern to the Alliance: first, security from internal subversion and external threats; second, the need to develop the economy of the country to provide better living conditions for a rapidly growing population; and third, the problem of promoting harmony among the different races with their varied religions, cultures and languages. In the first and second areas, the Alliance has had much success. In the third lies the root issue in Malaysia, and here recent events have brought a serious crisis.

THREATS TO SECURITY

When Malaya became independent in 1957, the insurrection of Communist terrorists, which began in 1948, was still not completely crushed. But by July, 1960, such progress had been made in hunting down the remaining bands of guerrillas that the Emergency (as it was called) was officially ended. The hard core of the insurgents, led by Chin Peng, the Secretary-General of the Malayan Communist party, withdrew over the border into southern Thailand where its present strength is estimated at about 900. Recently, there has been an increase in incidents between the guerrillas and Thai and Malaysian police. At present they do not pose a serious threat to Malaysia, but if internal strife should break out they would be in a strategic position to intervene.

The formation of the enlarged Malaysia in 1963 occasioned a quarrel with the two neighboring countries to which the Malays felt most akin, Indonesia and the Philippines,

both of whom refused to grant recognition.

Indonesia, with more than ten times the population of Malaysia, threatened to crush the new federation by all means short of open war. Confrontation took the form of the infiltration of guerrilla bands into East Malaysia and the encouragement of dissident groups, particularly in Sarawak. A few commandos were landed in West Malaysia, but were quickly rounded up. Some 50,000 British and other Commonwealth troops came to the aid of Malaysia.

The policy of confrontation was, for the most part, an attempt by Indonesian President Sukarno to divert the attention of his people from the grave economic troubles within Indonesia. But it also may have been due to the constant fear of the Javanese—who by weight of numbers dominate Indonesia—that the outer islands might be drawn away into new political units, thus leading to the disintegration of the vast island empire ruled from Djakarta.

There have been sporadic Indonesian revolts against rule from Java in such areas as the south Moluccas and Sumatra, and much smoldering resentment remains. Sumatra, larger but less populous than Java, has some of the most valuable resources in Indonesia, such as oil, rubber and tin, but Sumatrans feel that they do not get a fair share in the government considering the foreign exchange their products provide. There were strong historical ties between Sumatra and Malaya across the Straits of Malacca before the establishment of British rule in Malaya and Dutch rule in Sumatra led to separate development. A union of Malaysia and Sumatra would in many ways be a logical development. This is the fear in the minds of the rulers of Indonesia. Although the fall of President Sukarno in 1965 led to the resumption of friendly relations with Malaysia, this anxiety is likely to be a factor in the relations between the two countries.

Malaysia's quarrel with the Philippines arose over the inclusion of Sabah (formerly British North Borneo) in Malaysia. Prior to British rule, part of the coast of Sabah was under the rather vague suzerainty of the

Sultans of Sulu in the south of the Philippine group of islands, while the rest was claimed by the Sultans of Brunei. In 1878, the Sultan of Sulu agreed to grant his lands in Borneo to a British concession seeker for an annual payment of \$5,000. This territory, together with some land ceded by Brunei, was developed and governed until World War II by the British North Borneo Company under a royal charter. After Sulu came under Spanish rule, Spain formally gave up all claims in Borneo in 1885 and the territory of the Chartered Company became a British protectorate.

The Philippine claim is based on the contention that the Sultan of Sulu only leased his Bornean territories and that there was no transfer of sovereignty. The present Philippine Republic claims to be the successor of the Sultan of Sulu and his Spanish suzerain. Nothing was heard of this claim during the years of United States rule in the Philippines, and it was only resurrected when Malaysia was formed. As far as can be seen, there is no desire at all on the part of the inhabitants of Sabah to join the Philippines, although they may have some doubts about their status within Malaysia. In the meanwhile, the quarrel continues to make regional cooperation more difficult. The Filipinos have stated that they will not resort to force, and with reasonable good will a settlement may be reached when the claim becomes less of an issue in the internal politics of the Philippines.

ECONOMIC PROGRESS

Despite these threats and the heavy addition they have made to the costs of defense, Malaysia has made remarkable economic progress in the past 12 years. The gross national product has grown at an average annual rate of 5.8 per cent in the 1960's. Exports have shown a favorable balance over imports in spite of the drop in the price of rubber and tin. Malaysia leads all other countries in the production of these products with about 40 per cent of the world total. Natural rubber, grown both on estates and by smallholders, occupies 4.5 million acres

or 65 per cent of all cultivated land, and the industry employs about one-third of the labor force directly or indirectly.

In recent years, natural rubber has had to compete with synthetic, but this situation has been met by improved methods of production. For the last 20 years a government-assisted program of replanting with higher-yielding trees has been carried out with much success. As these trees come into yield after about seven years, productivity has steadily risen from an average of 350 lbs. per acre per annum in 1953 to nearly 500 lbs. per acre per annum today. About 80 per cent of estate acreage and over 60 per cent of small holdings have been replanted. The limit of increased productivity has not yet been reached, for strains have been developed experimentally which yield 3,000 lbs. per acre per annum.

The development of these high-yielding trees has been part of the work of the Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia, supported by the industry since 1925 and recognized as the leading institution of its kind in the world. The R.R.I. has also helped in other phases of rubber technology, particularly in the preparation and marketing of the product. Under the Standard Malaysian Rubber Scheme, which came into force in 1966, natural rubber is graded scientifically to guaranteed technical specifications and marketed in uniform-size polythene-wrapped bales. Research is also being carried out on oil-extended rubber tread for tires, which has special skid-resistant qualities in snow and ice. Thus the serious drop in the price of rubber has been offset so that the industry is still able to compete profitably in the world market.

The Malaysian government has made great efforts to diversify the economy and to reduce the dependence on rubber and tin while at the same time opening up more land for settlement. Most spectacular has been the increase in the production of palm oil. In 1956, Malaysia produced 56,000 tons of oil. By 1970, it is estimated that she will produce 356,000 tons, exceeding the combined production of Nigeria and the Congo.

Palm oil acreage during the same period will increase from 100,000 acres to 400,000 acres. The government hopes the area devoted to palm oil ultimately will reach three million acres with the help of new land settlement schemes.

Among these schemes the most ambitious is the Jengka Triangle Project in the state of Pahang, now being developed with the assistance of a World Bank loan of 14 million U.S. dollars. In the first stage, to be completed in 1970, 35,000 acres of forest land will be cleared for 2,800 families, each with ten acres of oil palm and a quarter-acre house lot. Eventually 150,000 acres in the Jengka Triangle will be settled.

Ever since large-scale development and immigration began some 80 years ago, West Malaysia has had to import rice, the staple food of most of the inhabitants, and this purchase has taken up a large proportion of the country's foreign exchange. At the same time, the increase of the mainly Malay population in the rice growing areas has led to the fragmentation of holdings and a demand for more land for cultivation. Since the plains suitable for rice growing are limited, it used to be thought that Malaysia could never reach self-sufficiency in rice production.

The Alliance government has been particularly anxious to improve the lot of the Malay peasantry from whom it draws its grass roots support. Accordingly, it has tackled the problem of rice production and new settlement with vigor and imagination. The largest scheme is the Muda Irrigation Project in the northern states of Kedah and Perlis, which is due for completion in 1970. The biggest such project in Southeast Asia, it will cost \$204 million¹ (Malaysian) and will irrigate 261,000 acres for double cropping. The smaller Kemubu Project in Kelantan will add another 47,000 acres for double cropping at a cost of \$51.7 million (Malaysian). When these areas come into production and are planted with improved strains of rice, it is believed that Malaysia may not only achieve the goal of self-suffi-

ciency, but may also have a surplus for export.

Much has also been done to improve the lot of the villagers by building roads and bridges, providing processing facilities for smallholders' rubber and palm oil, building more rural schools, health clinics and agricultural training centers, and bringing electrical power, long enjoyed in the towns, to more than a thousand villages.

Under the First Malaysian Plan (1966-1970) output of electricity will be almost doubled. In February, 1968, the National Electricity Board completed the Batang Padang hydroelectric scheme in the Cameron Highlands at a cost of \$142 million (Malaysian). This plant is able to supply the entire present needs of the west coast of West Malaysia, while future needs will be met by the biggest thermal power station in the country, now under construction at Port Dickson.

Only brief mention can be made of other Malaysian advances, such as the experiments with sugar cane and cocoa cultivation; the tremendous increase in the production of lumber from the forests which still cover 80 per cent of the country; the building of roads to connect the east and west coasts of West Malaysia and to open up the largely undeveloped East Malaysia; the expansion of dock facilities, especially at Port Swettenham; and the construction of a new international airport at Kuala Lumpur. Social progress has gone forward at the same time. All children are to have a minimum of nine years of education, and the number of students is over two million or 20 per cent of the population.

Malaysia's progress has been made without United States aid except for the Peace Corps assistance and with comparatively small loans from the World Bank and Commonwealth nations. Her public debt amounting to about \$3,500 million (Malaysian) is moderate for a country with a gross national product of about \$1,000 million, especially as 85 per cent represents domestic and only 15 per cent external debt. The Malaysian currency has remained strong—when the British pound was devalued in November, 1967, the Malaysian dollar did not have to

¹ The Malaysian dollar is worth one-third of the U.S. dollar.

follow suit. Much foreign capital has been attracted and new industries have been started.

RACIAL TENSION

This impressive record has been possible because the Alliance, although dominated by U.M.N.O., has up to now made a sincere attempt to secure the cooperation of the other races. In return for this friendly approach, moderate Chinese and Indians have accepted loyally the special rights and privileges given to the Malays by the constitution. Thus Islam is the religion of the state, and Malay is recognized as the language which will replace English eventually for government purposes. All nine Malay States on the mainland have Malay Sultans as their formal heads, and one of them is elected King for a term of five years. In these Malay States the *Mentri Besar*, or head of the local government, and his chief assistants are always Malays. In the former British settlements of Penang and Malacca it has become customary for either the governor or the chief minister to be a Malay, the other post being held by a Chinese. Malays also hold most of the top posts in the Malayan Civil Service, the army, the navy, the air force and the police. In West Malaysia, all Malays are automatically citizens with voting rights, whereas members of other races born before 1957 must apply for citizenship which is given subject to conditions. However, a new generation has been growing up since 1957 which is entitled to citizenship irrespective of race.

The M.C.A. (Malayan Chinese Association), second partner in the Alliance, is largely drawn from the wealthier Chinese merchant class. It has provided notable leaders like Tan Siew Sin, the able Finance Minister, and Lim Swee Aun, Minister of Commerce and Industry. In fact, the allocation of these portfolios to the M.C.A. is indicative of the understanding that the Malays, with about 10 out of 18 Cabinet ministers, are to hold the main share of political power as long as the Chinese retain their predominance in business. To the rising generation of Malays and Chinese,

however, this Alliance of Malay aristocrats and Chinese merchants is not attractive. Hence Malays drift to the more extreme Pan-Malayan Islamic party and urban Chinese drift to socialist parties such as the Democratic Action party.

The role of the Malayan Indian Congress (M.I.C.) in the Alliance has been minor, owing to the smaller Indian population. Even so, much of the discontent with a Malay-dominated government applies equally to the Indians. The M.I.C. has never been able to speak confidently for the whole community.

The motive for the formation of the Alliance in the first place was the desire to gain independence from Britain at the earliest possible date. As long as this was the paramount issue no other party had a real chance. The success of Tunku Abdul Rahman and his Alliance in achieving independence quickly and peacefully gave them the prestige that has kept them in power ever since. Yet the Alliance, like the Congress party which came to power in India in similar circumstances, contains people of very diverse views. Now that the common motive of working for independence is removed, these rifts widen and sooner or later new groupings on ideological or racial lines seem inevitable. How these new party lines are drawn will depend much on the leaders of U.M.N.O. during the next few years. They will need courage to stand up for a continuance of racial co-operation, for they have had trouble within their ranks whenever there seemed to be a possibility of an effective Chinese opposition.

The first such occasion came in 1965, less than two years after the formation of Malaysia. At that time, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore was growing restive under the conditions which gave him and his state so little voice in the Malay-dominated central government. As leader of the Peoples Action party, mainly Chinese but pledged to a multiracial and multicultural society in Singapore, Lee began to reach out to the nearly three million Chinese on the mainland. An attempt was made to form a common front with small socialist parties and

to put up P.A.P. candidates in the 1964 elections. Lee had little success, and only one P.A.P. member was elected outside Singapore.

Yet even this mild threat was enough to cause an outburst from the rank and file of U.M.N.O. and riots between the races in several towns. Tunku Abdul Rahman, desiring above all communal peace, bowed before the storm, convinced that only the expulsion of Singapore from Malaysia would satisfy his followers. The necessary amendment to the constitution was rushed through, and Lee Kuan Yew and his more than one million Chinese were pushed out to fend for themselves.

The second occasion came in May, 1969, immediately after the election for the federal parliament. In this election U.M.N.O. lost seats in rural Malay areas to the Pan Malayan Islamic party, which advocates a policy of Malaysia for the Malays and opposes multi-racialism. In urban areas the Democratic Action party, which wants a truly "Malaysian Malaysia," won several seats mainly from the M.C.A.

The immediate result was an outbreak of rioting between Malays and Chinese, beginning in Kuala Lumpur on May 13 after an exuberant celebration of election victories by the Chinese. The strife spread to other places and went on for a month. The official death toll is given as 200, but observers believe that the victims, mainly Chinese, were more numerous. Strong action was taken by the government. The constitution was suspended. Over 6,000 arrests were made. Press censorship was imposed and several local and foreign publications were banned. Newspapers still in circulation have been asked to refrain from mentioning the names of banned journals. All the functions of government have been given to a National Operations Council headed by Tun Abdul Razak, the Deputy Prime Minister. This council contains no Chinese.

It is difficult at this stage to be sure of all the details of what happened in that troubled month, but there were disquieting reports

that the Malay troops and police dealt harshly with the Chinese while doing little to restrain their own people. The restoration of the constitution is being postponed unjustifiably, and emergency decrees are being used not only to restore order but also to retain an exclusively Malay regime. For example, edicts have been issued to change the language of instruction in all schools to Malay. This means a complete overthrow of the delicate compromise worked out by representatives of all races in the Education Act of 1957, which has been the basis of educational policy until now. Chinese and Indians, while willing to accept the teaching of the Malay language as a subject, have fought tenaciously for the right to have their children taught through their mother tongue, except for the few who have attended the multiracial English-medium schools. They will never accept peacefully a system which denies this right.

The Malays feel deeply that West Malaysia is their land and that they must not give up effective control of it to immigrant races, whose presence at heart they resent. They hope to see the other races assimilated, forcefully if necessary, into one Malay-speaking people, as the Indonesians and Thai have tried to assimilate their Chinese minorities. On the other hand the Chinese, with their natural pride in their ancient civilization, will not submit to such treatment by a people whom they regard as backward and inferior in culture. The same applies in large measure to the Indians.

The belief that 4.5 million Malays can dominate 3.5 million Chinese and 1 million Indians forever and assimilate them culturally

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"While the immediate prospects of the present regime in Indonesia are fairly good, the long-term outlook is decidedly bleak."

Indonesia's Uncertain Future

BY BENEDICT R. O'G. ANDERSON

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ON APRIL 1, 1969, the President of Indonesia, General Suharto, formally inaugurated his government's first five year plan, almost exactly three years after the silent coup of March 11, 1966, which finally toppled former President Sukarno from power.¹ These three years were devoted largely to the political consolidation of the regime and to an economic program of stabilization and rehabilitation, both essential pre-conditions for the plan's success.

The importance of the plan is at least as much political as economic. General Suharto himself has repeatedly stated that his government will ultimately be judged by its economic performance, its ability not only to stem the decline of the Sukarno years, but to generate real growth and to raise the living standards of the Indonesian people. He has also frequently warned that the failure of the plan will mean "disaster." Suharto's statements reflect a wide consensus among observers within and outside Indonesia that the basic legitimacy of the present regime will depend above all on its economic

achievements. No balanced estimate of the prospects of success is possible, however, without some understanding both of what has been achieved so far and of the magnitude of the problems still unsolved.

The Suharto government's efforts in the economic field over the past three years have been directed towards creating the necessary basis for a program of sustained economic development. Internally, the primary objectives have been to control the fantastic hyperinflation of the last Sukarno years;² to balance the budget; to rationalize the civil service; to discipline the banking system; and to cut back corruption. Externally, the government has worked to secure the rescheduling of payments on Indonesia's massive international debt, and to create a climate in Indonesia which would encourage both private investment by foreign companies and large flows of aid from friendly governments and such institutions as the World Bank. To a considerable degree these initial objectives have been achieved.

By 1968, inflation had been reduced to no more than an 85 per cent annual increase. Draconic restrictions on state expenditures permit her economists to predict that in the coming year Indonesia will have a small budgetary surplus after a decade of heavy deficit financing. The new, tight budgetary discipline, however, is not only designed to help fight inflation. It is also intended to increase Cabinet control of the bureaucracy and to heighten its sense of financial responsibility. The government has also made

¹ On Sukarno's fall from power, see Frederick Bunnell, "Indonesia's Quasi-Military Regime," *Current History*, January, 1967; and John Hughes, *Indonesian Upheaval* (New York: David McKay, 1967).

² For a full discussion of the hyperinflation of the Guided Democracy period, see J. A. C. Mackie, *Problems of the Indonesian Inflation* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesian Project, 1967). Mackie notes (p. 82) that the consumer price index rose from 100 to 2,450 between July, 1958, and July, 1964. In 1966, the inflation rate was 650 per cent, according to Guy J. Pauker, "Indonesia: The Age of Reason?" *Asian Survey*, February, 1968, p. 139.

very plain its view that rational development plans can not be worked out or carried through except on a firm budgetary basis.

To help achieve a healthier balance between its revenues and expenditures, the government has taken firm action in two complementary areas. Routine administrative costs have been cut back by the government's policy, established in 1966, to accept no new personnel into the grossly swollen state bureaucracy—graduates of high schools and universities have in effect been told to look for employment elsewhere. At the same time, severe political purges have worked further to reduce the size and the financial burden of the civil service. On the other hand, serious steps have been taken to increase the effectiveness of the existing taxation system, so that more of Djakarta's new rich actually pay the taxes which their political influence and a corrupt internal revenue service habitually permitted them to evade.³ Strong measures have also been taken against many private banks, often under the control of different military cliques, whose dubious operations seriously undermined confidence in the banking system as a whole. In the area of fighting corruption the government has been considerably less successful, though at least one general has been imprisoned for gross embezzlement and it is possible that others will follow.

The success of these domestic economic policies, devised and implemented by a small group of civilian ministers, mostly professional economists from the University of Indonesia, has done much to secure the confidence and support of the United States and allied powers. At the time of its accession to power, the Suharto government was confronted with the fact that Indonesia had an accumulated external debt of some \$2.3

billion, half of which was owed to the Soviet Union. However, by pointing to current domestic economic policies, to Indonesia's clear inability to pay, and to the marked pro-Western shift in her foreign policy since 1966, Indonesian negotiators have been able to persuade the creditor nations, at least from the United States bloc, to reschedule payment of existing debts over an extended period of time and to nullify any interest due on these debts. These rescheduling agreements have given the Indonesian government an effective diplomatic pretext for fending off its creditors within the Soviet bloc.⁴

At the same time, Indonesia's Western creditors have also become her financial backers. Clearly encouraged by a greatly liberalized law on foreign investment and the return to their previous owners of various assets taken over by the Sukarno regime, the member nations of the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI), i.e., the United States, Great Britain, France, West Germany, Japan, Italy, Switzerland and Australia, have shown a reciprocal friendliness.

The Suharto government has thus been the recipient of ever increasing amounts of aid, amounting in 1969 to an estimated \$500 million, of which almost half will have come from the United States. Future aid levels, the Indonesian government hopes, will be even higher. But it should be noted that while this high level of external aid is clearly essential for the implementation of the five year plan, as of now, and probably for the immediate future, it means that over two-thirds of the Suharto government's financial resources come from abroad, and only one-third from internal resources. In other words, the government has mortgaged itself far more heavily than Sukarno once did.

Private capital has also been moving into Indonesia at a brisk rate. To date, an estimated \$640.7 million has been committed in various sectors (excluding petroleum); the bulk of this investment coming from United States and Japanese corporations.⁵

It is in the light of these developments that the five year plan is to be understood. The government recognizes that Indonesia is

³ According to one experienced observer, only 250,000 out of Indonesia's 125,000,000 people paid direct taxes in 1966. These taxes provided 20 per cent of the government's income. See the statement of Kosasih Purwanegara SH, in *Suluh Marhaen*, May 25, 1967.

⁴ See Bunnell, *op. cit.*, p. 27, and J. Panglaykim and K. D. Thomas, "The Road to Amsterdam and Beyond: Aspects of Indonesia's Stabilization Program," *Asian Survey*, October, 1967, p. 689.

⁵ *Antara*, January 8, 1969.

still overwhelmingly an agricultural country, and that for both political and economic reasons increased food production must be the prime target of agricultural development. At the same time, it is obvious that this sector of the economy is perhaps the one least likely to attract foreign investors. Accordingly, almost one-third of the Rp. 1,059,000,000,000 budget⁶ for the plan is to go directly to agriculture, the next most important sectors being communications and mining/industry.⁷ A major effort is already under way to accelerate the propagation of the so-called "miracle rice" strains; and contracts have been signed with German and Swiss chemical companies for aerial spraying of crops in a major attempt to raise agricultural productivity.

Such are the economic policies and expectations of the Suharto government. What are the prospects of their fulfillment? The answer depends primarily on three uncertain factors: whether a sustained, long-term flow of aid can be obtained from the IGGI or some similar group; whether Suharto and his associates can maintain a reasonable level of political stability over at least a decade; and whether Indonesia's grave social problems, both old and new, can be decisively ameliorated. None of these factors can readily be isolated from one another.

FOREIGN POLICY

The Suharto government has done everything possible to develop warm and com-
plaisant relations with the United States bloc, partly to insure the urgently needed flow of goods and capital. Confrontation with Malaysia was effectively terminated by

August, 1966.⁸ Publicly expressed opposition to United States policy in Vietnam has been largely muted, especially in the last two years. Several important military leaders have even hinted their general support for the American position, although the government's official posture is that Vietnam's problems must be settled by the Vietnamese themselves, and Djakarta maintains its older diplomatic relations with Hanoi. More recently, close ties have been built up with such strong United States allies as South Korea, Thailand and Taiwan. Relations with Communist China have been frozen since Djakarta and Peking withdrew their respective ambassadors on November 1, 1967.⁹ Attitudes towards the U.S.S.R. remain decidedly cool. By contrast, United States President Richard Nixon was warmly received when he visited Indonesia in late July, 1969, in the first such visit by an American President in Indonesian history.

The Suharto government's pro-Western foreign policy has already aroused misgivings in certain elite circles in Djakarta, and runs the risk of eventually stirring up a strong nationalist reaction in many sections of Indonesian society, particularly when foreign enterprises begin to make a social impact. Yet for the time being the government seems sufficiently united and determined to insist on its retention. In this case, the imponderables arise in the external sphere. How seriously will the deepening internal crisis in the United States compel the diminution of aid flows overseas? What will be the dimensions of the United States Southeast Asia policy in the event of its exclusion from Vietnam? To what extent will the regional balance of power shift in the coming decade? None of these questions is easily answered, yet Indonesia's prospects clearly depend heavily on their outcome.

INTERNAL POLITICAL STABILITY

In the short run, at least, the key to political stability in Indonesia lies in her 350,000-man army, Suharto's original power base and still the major prop of his regime. Yet in many respects the army is an uncertain quantity.

⁶ The figure is taken from a release of the Promotion Division of the Foreign Investment Board of the Indonesian government, dated as of September 1, 1969.

⁷ Foreign Investment Board, Investment Promotion Division, *Selected Statistics on Indonesia* (Djakarta: 1969), p. 14, gives a full breakdown of planned expenditures.

⁸ The best recent analysis of Indonesia's foreign policy and the pressures which shape it is to be found in Franklin B. Weinstein, *Indonesia Abandons Confrontation* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1969).

⁹ Cf. Pauker, *op. cit.*, p. 142. The actual break took place on October 31.

From the period of its birth in the early days of the revolution in 1945, the army has been an intensely political organization, riven by ethnic, ideological and factional divisions. Over the past 24 years it has moved slowly and unevenly towards greater unity and homogeneity, largely through major purges within its ranks. The failure of the C. I. A.-backed regional rebellion in Sumatra and the Celebes in 1958 made the Indonesian army an essentially Java-based organization. The massive arrests and purges which followed the downfall of the September 30th Movement in 1965, and the extermination campaigns against the Communists in 1965-1966 removed from its ranks a large group of left-oriented officers and men.

Nonetheless, the army today remains a fissiparous organization, united largely by fear of Communist revenge, hostility to civilian control, and a determination to maintain its position of privilege and power. There is intra-service antagonism between the three core divisions of West, Central and East Java; between Javanese and non-Javanese, Nationalist and pro-Western officers; and between the often very corrupt field grade officers and the usually impoverished lower ranks. Suharto's task has been to keep control over conflicting interests.¹⁰

Broadly speaking, since 1966, two major groups have been struggling for dominance. The first is a better educated, pro-Western, and socially prominent group of generals—mainly from the Siliwangi Division of West Java—who have dominated most of the territorial command positions and the Army Strategic Reserve, which includes the elite paratroop regiment. Though it was this group that initially brought Suharto to power, it has tended to lose ground ever since. In part this is because Suharto has tried to avoid becoming the prisoner of any faction; in

part also it derives from the fact that this group has been most outspokenly hostile to the political parties. Suharto, like his predecessor, has found it useful to try to maintain good relations with party leaders for the sake of broadening his political base. Of the four central members of this group, the former paratroop commander, General Sarwo Edhie, has been given the remote territorial command of West Irian; General Kemal Idris, former head of the Army Strategic Reserve, has been assigned to a staff position in the Celebes; General Dharsono, chief of the Siliwangi Division, is ambassador in Bangkok; and the departure of the fourth, General Jasin, territorial commander in East Java, is expected soon.

The rival faction, a generally more Java-oriented and conservative group of senior staff officers, originating mainly from Suharto's own Diponegoro Division in Central Java, is entrenched in the General Staff and the Ministry of Defense. This group generally favors maintaining minimal relations with the parties; in style and temperament its members tend to be similar to Suharto himself.

For the moment, Suharto's control of the army seems firm enough, though it is based on a complex network of shifting alliances and unpublicized bargains and compromises. The army nonetheless poses major political problems for Suharto. In the first place, the army was the main beneficiary of the 1957 nationalization of Dutch enterprises. As a result, corruption in senior army circles is widespread and notorious throughout Indonesia. To attack this corruption openly would certainly give Suharto great public support and would unclog many of the worst bottlenecks in the state bureaucracy. On the other hand, since the generals are for the time being the core of his support, he dares do little that would seriously undermine their loyalty. But again, Suharto must worry that if the present situation continues too long, he may become fully identified with his generals, and eventually he may be the target of conspiracies hatched by discontented younger officers.

¹⁰ See the excellent analysis of Suharto's problems in this respect given in Herbert Feith, "Suharto's Search for a Political Format," *Indonesia*, October, 1968, especially pp. 102-104. For a detailed and vivid study of the complexities of intra-army politics in an earlier period, see John R. W. Smail, "The Military Politics of North Sumatra: December 1956-October 1957," *Indonesia*, October, 1968, pp. 128-187.

In another respect, the military may create more instability than stability in the long run. At the moment, they control all the positions of real power in the Cabinet and two-thirds of the regional governorships; they dominate local administration and the state enterprises, and have penetrated to virtually every department of the government. This aggrandizement has aroused great resentment among displaced or threatened civilians and in many instances it has meant a decline in the honesty, creativity and flexibility of the administration. It has also left Suharto without an external agency of supervision and control over his bureaucracy's performance. The militarization of the government has thus paradoxically reduced the ability of the center to dominate and discipline its agents.

But political stability will not only depend on Suharto's capacity to lead, energize and discipline the military. Government based on military force alone tends nowadays to be "nasty, brutish and (relatively) short." It is also very expensive in terms of materiel, funds and creative energy. Almost from the start Suharto has been aware of the need to develop some popular support for his regime. So far, however, he has not been very successful. What remains of the left is, of course, fundamentally hostile, though it is for the moment impotent. The new leadership of the Nationalist party (P.N.I.), imposed by the military, gives public support to Suharto, but its mass followers, mostly sympathetic to Sukarno and his ideas, remain sullen and isolated. The Muslim parties, violently anti-Communist and anti-Sukarno on the whole, have nonetheless been kept at arm's length because of anti-Muslim feeling in the military and the civil service; as a result they are highly frustrated. Only the small Christian parties seem fully committed to the government, in part because of their fear of militant Islam. As for the students, who took so spectacular a part in the overthrow of Sukarno, they are now deeply divided along

religious and party lines. Many of their leaders have been co-opted by the government and accordingly have lost the confidence of their comrades.¹¹ Many of the rank and file have become disillusioned by Suharto's prosaic style, the corruption of the government and the growing difficulties of finding employment.

Suharto has tried to cultivate non-military support by giving some places in his Cabinet to professional experts and to party leaders; by cultivating a civilian image himself; and by continuing to stress the importance of constitutional methods and institutions. He has effectively used the large military bloc in the appointed Parliament and the Provisional People's Representative Assembly (M.P.R.S.) to persuade these bodies not only to elevate him to his present office, but to provide a stable institutional appearance of nationwide support. He has even committed himself, via a resolution of the M.P.R.S., to hold general elections before July 5, 1971, though most observers are sceptical as to whether this promise will be fulfilled.

While Suharto is generally respected as an individual, he has no charisma and his economic rehabilitation program in itself has little political glamor. In spite of a lack of wide public support, Suharto has little serious legal opposition to face. The government's opponents are too divided among themselves, too poor and too afraid of the military's security apparatus to be very effective. As for extra-legal opposition to the regime, it is unlikely that Suharto will have much to fear in the next five years. The terrible campaign launched by the army against the Communists in 1965-1966 not only cost at least a quarter of a million lives, but shattered the party organization completely. What may have been the start of a guerrilla resistance movement in East Java was destroyed in the summer of 1968.¹² It will be some years before the Communists can reorganize and arm themselves and present the government with substantial security problems.

The most fundamental and intractable social program is demographic. Indonesia's population of about 125 million is rising by

¹¹ Cf. Feith, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-105.

¹² See John M. Allison, "Indonesia: Year of the Pragmatists," *Asian Survey*, February, 1969, pp. 132-133.

at least 2.3 per cent a year.¹³ (Next year it will grow by almost three million.) Population density in Central Java increased from 477 to 575 persons per square kilometer between 1961 and 1968.¹⁴ Birth control programs have scarcely started and transmigration schemes have proved a total failure. Land problems, especially in Java and Bali, are very grave. The elimination of the Communist party has meant that even the mild agrarian reform laws of the Sukarno years have become a dead letter; land-grabbing, speculation and ruinous tenancy conditions are rife. Almost half the work force in Indonesia is under-employed or unemployed.¹⁵ The trend towards increasing stratification, already evident in the Sukarno years, has subsequently accelerated: the gap between the ostentatiously rich and the grindingly poor continues to grow, especially in the swelling cities. Effective unions do not exist; strikes are outlawed; and the real wages of the urban workers are extremely low.

AFTERMATH OF THE MASSACRE

Added to these continuing and deepening problems are the new difficulties resulting from the ruthless massacres of 1965–1966.

¹³ Ir. J. F. Wattimena gives this conservative estimate in an article in the respected Catholic daily *Kompas*, July 21, 1967. Others give a figure of 2.8 per cent (Pauker, *op. cit.*, p. 139).

¹⁴ These figures were given by the demographer, Professor Johannes, in *Antara*, January 30, 1969. In the Jogjakarta area, the density reaches a peak of 775 persons per square kilometer.

¹⁵ Statement of Wattimena cited above. But cf. Pauker, *op. cit.*, p. 140, for a less grim view.

¹⁶ *Amnesty International Review*, November, 1967, suggests a figure between 100,000 and 150,000; Harald Munthe-Kaas suggests numbers between 80,000 and 150,000 (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 2, 1967); Herbert Feith believes that the figure may be as high as 150,000 (*Groene Amsterdammer*, May 18, 1968). Estimates are made more difficult by the fact that while some prisoners are being released, new arrests continue to be made.

¹⁷ For example, the then Acting Governor of East Java, Mohd. Nur, stated in mid-1967 that as a result of the anti-Communist purges, his province was short 10,215 teachers, only about 25 per cent of whom could in the short run be replaced (*Suluh Marhaen*, June 16, 1967). M. E. Soebadinata, general chairman of the pro-government teachers' association, stated that no less than 25,000 teachers had been purged in all Indonesia, of whom perhaps 10,000 had been killed (*Kompas*, March 20, 1967).

No reliable figures are available on the numbers of political prisoners in prisons and concentration camps, but conservative estimates go well over 100,000.¹⁶ There are hundreds of thousands of widows and children of Communists who are social pariahs, often forced into prostitution or petty crime because they can get no work. Prior to 1965, the Communist party was particularly strong among miserably paid primary school teachers; the killings destroyed a large part of the educational infrastructure of the country.¹⁷ This will accelerate the educational decline which has been marked since the late 1950's, a decline to which the currently very small educational budget will undoubtedly contribute. Lastly, the hatreds generated by the killings will continue to poison rural life for at least a generation to come. This will certainly hinder any serious government efforts to develop the agricultural sector, and may ultimately provide the springboard for armed struggle in the countryside on the part of a successful National Liberation Front.

While the immediate prospects of the present regime in Indonesia are fairly good, the longer-term outlook is decidedly bleak. Not only are military governments ill-adapted to sustained development tasks under the best of circumstances, but the Indonesian military government faces an uncertain international future, divisions within its own ranks, a narrow base of public support, and highly intractable social and economic problems, some inherited and some of its own making.

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"After almost eight years of American preoccupation with the conflict in Vietnam, attention is once again broadening to include Thailand and Laos."

Recurring Problems in Laos

BY ELIZABETH URROWS
Assistant Editor, CURRENT HISTORY

LAOS IS KNOWN as the Land of the Ten Thousand Elephants. The number is undoubtedly an exaggeration, but the name underlines the primitive Laotian jungle setting that has persisted into the last part of the twentieth century. Ninety per cent of the Laotians are illiterate peasants. They plant and harvest their rice by the dictates of the monsoon season, wading through the Mekong-flooded lowland paddies or slashing and burning clearings on the mountainsides. Rivers and jungle trails carry far more traffic than the few roads and, in the words of John Kenneth Galbraith, "The writ of the government runs only as far as the airport."¹

Present day Laotians descend from the eleventh century clans who drifted south from Yunnan Province in China and intermarried with local Khmer tribesmen. From the fourteenth through the nineteenth centuries sporadic fighting occurred with neighboring Burmese, Shan, Annamese and Siamese. Borders and sovereignties shifted until, in 1899, the French established Laos as a French protectorate.²

In World War II, under the Japanese occupation, the groundwork was laid for independence. The Lao Issara, or Free Laotian party, was established with the avowed

goal of resisting foreign control. After the war, the French fought their way back into Indochina and, in 1950, they granted Laos "full independence" within the French Union. This split the Lao Issara into two factions. The majority group won the support of the United States and France. The minority faction, the Pathet Lao, insisted on complete independence and won the prompt support of the Vietminh—the Communist dominated Vietnam Independence League—and of the U.S.S.R. By 1953, the warring factions had once again turned Laos into a battleground.

After the defeat of the French in Vietnam at Dienbienphu in May, 1954, the Geneva Conference, called to settle the conflict in Indochina, ordered a cease-fire throughout the area on July 20. Laos was subsequently divided into two zones, with the Pathet Lao in control of the northeast provinces of Phongsaly and Samnen. Elections were to be held in 1955. These elections, boycotted by the Pathet Lao, established a government under Prince Souvanna Phouma. A series of coups (May, 1957; August, 1960) again threw the country into turmoil. Serious fighting broke out in late 1960 with the Pathet Lao fighting to extend its territory. In an attempt to settle the dispute, the 14-nation Geneva Conference was reconvened in July, 1962, and established a shaky coalition government, again under neutralist Prince Souvanna Phouma.

This coalition was made up of four Pathet

¹ *Ambassador's Journal* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969).

² One of the Associated States of Indochina, which also included Cambodia and the three sections of Vietnam. See Joseph Buttinger, *Vietnam: A Political History* (New York: Praeger, 1968).

Lao members, four right-wing royalists and eight neutralists. Laos was to remain a neutral nation, and outside armed forces were to be banned.

Three sets of military authorities held de facto control; the Pathet Lao in the north-east, the neutralist forces of Souvanna Phouma in central Laos, and the royalists under Phoumi Nosavan in the west.

The Pathet Lao boycotted the coalition, remaining at first in its northern provinces. Its North Vietnamese allies, occupied with the war in Vietnam, could provide only minimum support. The Pathet Lao resumed open fighting against the government in 1963. Anxious to protect their network of jungle trails running parallel to North and South Vietnam inside the border of Laos, the North Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao increased the tempo of their attacks on government bases the following year. The jungle trails, known collectively as the Ho Chi Minh Trail, had become the main route by which North Vietnam supplied the forces in South Vietnam with material and reinforcements. Protected from aerial observation by dense forests and their location in a neutral country, the trails offered North Vietnam a highly valued military advantage. To protect the trails and to end occasional government attacks on the supply routes, Pathet Lao forces, backed substantially by North Vietnamese troops, pushed farther and farther into central Laos. Perhaps foreseeing that the eventual end of the war in Vietnam might freeze the status quo in Southeast Asia, the insurgents seemed intent on adding as much real estate as possible to their holdings.

A right-wing coup d'état occurred in April, 1964, which was finally reversed by pressure brought to bear on the royalists by Britain and the United States. This further alienated the Pathet Lao from the central government.

By the end of 1968, virtually all of the Plain of Jars in Central Laos was in Pathet

Lao hands. Prince Souvanna Phouma ordered sorties by Laotian government Air Force fighter-bombers against the Pathet Lao whenever the weather permitted, but this bombing produced no marked diminution of the flow of supplies southward.

UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT

The United States has had a continuing interest in Laos since the 1950's. The departure of the French from Indochina following their 1954 defeat at Dienbienphu, and the Domino Theory³ espoused by United States President Dwight D. Eisenhower's Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, made it inevitable that the United States would view with deep concern the stance of the Pathet Lao. Dulles hoped to make Laos a "bulwark against communism." So did his successor, Dean Rusk, during the administrations of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.

United States economic aid to the government of Laos has become increasingly generous in the 1960's. The Laotian economy features annual exports of about \$1 million and imports of about \$33 million. Coffee, timber and tin account for Laos' foreign sales. There is also a thriving market for the opium crop. In the years 1955-1956, the United States gave Laos \$48 million. By 1968, the United States was giving Laos \$60 million in technical aid, for a wide variety of projects ranging from planting IR-8 strains of rice to assistance in building a large hydroelectric dam. There was, in addition, extensive military aid to the government, thought to amount to another \$200 million.⁴

There have been a number of American military advisers in Laos for a decade. Their chief function until recently was to keep a watchful eye on North Vietnamese use of the Ho Chi Minh Trail and to strengthen the regular Laotian army in its fight against the Pathet Lao. Some 48,000 North Vietnamese are estimated to be aiding the Pathet Lao in their assaults on government territory.

When former President Lyndon Johnson ordered a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam, B-52 bombers were able to step up

³ This theory held that if one country in the area fell to the Communists, the others would follow, one after another, like dominoes.

⁴ *The New York Times*, Sept. 28, 1969.

their raids on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. From April to October, 1969, United States planes flew hundreds of sorties a day, frequently refueling in the air over Laos while searching out more targets. Some 600,000 Laotians were reported homeless in the wake of the bombing.

From the middle of the 1960's, American attention was focused on the escalating war in Vietnam and then on the debate over de-escalation. The "problem of Southeast Asia" meant the war in Vietnam. But on September 6, 1969, reports from Vientiane announced that Laotian government forces, supported by United States air power, had launched an offensive into the Plain of Jars and, farther south, on Laotian towns guarding the approaches to the Ho Chi Minh Trail. This was the first widely published report of direct United States action in Laos against Laotians. Thai soldiers were also reported to be taking part in the attacks against the Pathet Lao.⁵ United States military planners were preparing the ground for the Laotian government advance in both the central and eastern regions. United States helicopters flew troops to the battle sites.

Prince Souvanna Phouma, aware of the ban on foreign forces dictated by the Geneva protocols (1962) and alert to United States Senate concern, denied that any foreign troops "except North Vietnamese" were operating in Laos. The usual "reliable sources," however, insisted that 5,000 Thai troops were integrated into the Laotian army and that United States military advisers to Laos numbered in the hundreds.⁶

These reports did not go unnoticed by the United States Senate. Some senators were still smarting from the use President Lyndon Johnson made of their Gulf of Tonkin Resolution,⁷ which his administration cited as authority to escalate the fighting in Vietnam. More recently, they had been upset again by a State Department confession, in July, 1969, of a secret commitment to Thailand permit-

ting the use of United States troops under Thai command to repel foreign aggression. Administration critics in the Senate were not disposed to treat this latest sign of United States involvement with indifference.

On September 17, 1969, by a vote of 86 to 0, the Senate tacked an amendment dealing with Southeast Asia onto a supplementary appropriation bill to indicate its fear that the United States was increasing its involvement in Laos. The Cooper Amendment, named for its sponsor, Republican John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky, specified that none of the appropriated funds could be used to support United States military activities in Laos or Thailand.⁸

Despite Senate unease the Defense Department let it be known that it would consider the restriction applicable only to the bill in question. Since the department already had considerable sums to spend in Thailand and Laos, it felt free, spokesmen indicated, to use these monies at its discretion.

Senate hearings into the whole question of United States involvement in Southeast Asia were subsequently scheduled for October 20. Without waiting for formal hearings to open, State Department officials were summoned to Capitol Hill to provide answers to urgent questions.

The first answers provided only increased confusion. Carl Bartch, State Department spokesman who appeared to answer questions on September 23, 1969, cited an official figure to show that 830 Americans were active in one way or another in Laos. The State Department list showed 500 embassy employees in the country. The Foreign Service Postings list showed 325 Americans assigned to the embassy, 10 of whom were military attachés. The remaining 175 were assumed to belong to a military assistance group attached to the embassy. Other "informed sources" listed as many as 1,000 United States military men in Laos, perhaps 300 of them Central Intelligence Agency employees.⁹ The discrepancy may be attributed partly to the fact that Bartch's figures showed only "permanent assignments" to Laos. The exact numbers are less meaningful than the fact that Thai

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⁵ *The New York Times*, Sept. 7, 1969.

⁶ *The New York Times*, Sept. 23, 1969.

⁷ See *Current History*, August, 1969, p. 113.

⁸ At this writing, the bill is in joint Senate-House conference.

⁹ *The New York Times*, September 28, 1969.

BOOK REVIEWS

WAR, PEACE AND THE VIET CONG.

By DOUGLAS PIKE (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1969. 186 pages and index, \$5.95.)

END OF A WAR: INDOCHINA, 1954.

By PHILIPPE DEVILLERS AND JEAN LACOUTURE (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969. 412 pages, bibliography and index, \$8.95.)

Much of *War, Peace and the Viet Cong* reviews the activities of all the contenders in the present Vietnamese conflict by relating them to an overall discussion of Vietnamese society, politics and social groupings. But the author is chiefly concerned with discussing the variety of strategic options and "scenarios" available to the major partners in the dispute. In order to achieve his objective, he identifies at length the key personalities, elements and factions that are struggling for supremacy in North and South Vietnam. Not as incisive, nor as scholarly, as the author's groundbreaking study, *Viet Cong*, this work concludes that both the Vietcong and the South Vietnamese government should be able to reconcile their differences in a final settlement in the near future. In one of his chapters, provocatively titled "Prognosis Without Prediction," the author's implied promise to cover both contingencies is not altogether successful. He notes a bewildering series of possible events, in and out of Vietnam, which could lead to a possible resolution of the conflict.

A more concise, scholarly and well reasoned account of a Vietnam war that did end—for France but not for the United States—is found in the Devillers and Lacouture book, *End of a War: Indochina, 1954*. In essence this work details the diplomatic interplays that culminated in the Geneva Conference of 1954. The account is well worth reading for it examines the abrupt shift in the continuity of

a war in which the West changed partners in Vietnam, whereas the North Vietnamese merely shifted their targets to meet the new challenger.

There are many fascinating details about decisions reached, promises made and hopes disappointed by world powers and personalities. The reader may be surprised to learn that national interests which receive considerable publicity in the world press are sometimes affected by the personal interests of statesmen.

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AMERICAN MILITARISM 1970. EDITED BY ERWIN KNOLE AND JUDITH NEIS MCFADDEN (New York: Viking Press, 1969. 131 pages, epilog and biographies of contributors, \$4.95.)

The Congressional Conference on the Military Budget and National Priorities was held in the spring of 1969. It included members of the Senate and House of Representatives, former government leaders, weapons experts and economists. This book is a condensation of the conference transcript.

Here, in one volume, is the clearest explanation yet compiled of the viewpoints of those who fear the growing militarization of American life. Whether or not one agrees with all the views expressed, one should read them with attention. There are clear—and startling—examples of the amount of America's available wealth which is going into weapons of destruction. Senator Gaylord Nelson speaks on behalf of young people and describes the causes of their unrest. The level of debate would be substantially elevated if all the contenders would speak this clearly.

O.E.S.

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POLITICS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

(Continued from page 326)

ents is still very wide. Thus, the purpose of the G.V.N. negotiating position is apparently an attempt to "buy time" from the United States in order to achieve the necessary balance between a broader popular base and an efficient political and military control mechanism.

On the domestic front, the G.V.N. has attempted to broaden its support among the urban population by creating a "Social Democratic Nationalist Front" (S.D.N.F.) and to appeal to the rural population by implementing a village development, land reform and agricultural and fishing development program.²¹

Apparently the formation of the S.D.N.F. was Thieu's attempt to establish a broadly based political movement in preparation for political competition with the N.L.F. In his message to the Joint Session of the National Assembly on April 7, 1969, Thieu cited the need for national political parties embodying a popular ideology with competent leadership and adequate organization:

With regard to organization, in the forthcoming days, I will actively promote the creation of a capable political union which befits the role and the meaning of the words, political party. I will outline to you a broad political union which may be called a group or a front. Its name may not be important, but its essence is composed of all those personalities, all those groups and denominations which agree with my policy to solve the nation's problems and with my objectives to

build democracy, solve the war and reform society.²²

This was followed by the announcement made by ten political parties that they would form a pro-G.V.N. alliance at a national convention to be held in May. The coalition met on May 25 and announced that it would be led by Thieu. However, it was evident that it had failed, because Buddhist and liberal groups refused to join.

The G.V.N.'s attempt to broaden its base in rural areas was based on an extension of the already established Revolutionary Development Program. During a press conference on February 7, 1969, Thieu set forth four major goals for the G.V.N.: (1) accelerating the pacification program, aiming at controlling 100 per cent of the population; (2) improving village and hamlet administration; (3) organizing village and hamlet elections; and (4) realizing land reform and the development of agriculture and fishing.²³

Primary emphasis of the new development program was in the two areas of village development and land reform.²⁴

In the field of village development, the emphasis was placed on expanding the size and powers of the village administrative committees. G.V.N. Decree No. 045, dated April 1, 1969, set forth the terms under which the village administrative committees' function and size were expanded. As a result, the village now retains the tax collected on its own land and a portion of other taxes, and has the authority to disburse funds on projects determined by the village officials.²⁵ In the past, villages levied taxes but had to transmit them to the G.V.N. at the national level. Projects desired by the village had to be submitted to the G.V.N. for approval and work had to wait until funds were disbursed by relevant G.V.N. ministries. In most cases, village projects were determined by province-level officials and were included in annual province budgets and programs. The result was that village officials were not consulted in any systematic way in identifying projects. Under the new system, the G.V.N. legitimizes those projects identified and funded by the village officials. It is obviously hoped

²¹ Press Conference of Nguyen Van Thieu on February 6, 1969, reported in *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (February 6-19, 1969), 1.

²² The complete text of the message is reprinted in *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (April 15, 1969), 1-12.

²³ Press conference of Nguyen Van Thieu, reported in *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (February 6-19, 1969), 1.

²⁴ Land reform in South Vietnam is discussed elsewhere in this journal.

²⁵ Refer to Republic of Vietnam Office of the Prime Minister, Circular 093-TT/NV, *Village and Hamlet Reorganization*, reprinted in *Public Administration Bulletin Vietnam: USAID*, 50 (August 1, 1968), 41-58.

that this new policy will provide reciprocal legitimacy for the G.V.N.

The result of all this appears to be that the N.L.F./P.R.G. has maintained the political (as distinct from the military) position achieved by the *Tet* 1968 offensive; the G.V.N. has recognized the need to assume a more independent position while convincing the United States that it should maintain a sufficient level of political and military support; and the United States has committed itself to reducing the number of United States military and civilian personnel in South Vietnam. The United States position has been that the "Americanization" of the war, which began in 1965, must be reversed; that the war must be "Vietnamized." As recently as September 17, 1969, Defense Secretary Melvin Laird stated that the "Vietnamization program" must be continued. The stated purpose of the program is to convince Hanoi and the N.L.F./P.R.G. that the G.V.N. is getting stronger every day and that, as time passes, the N.L.F./P.R.G.'s negotiating position will become increasingly weaker.

Spokesmen for the G.V.N. have often stated that they are increasingly able to shoulder the major responsibility for the war. Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky has argued that prior to 1969, the United States paid too much attention to its own military forces and did not actively promote the modernization and development of G.V.N. armed forces, implying that with the proper equipment the South Vietnamese would do much better.²⁶ However, President Thieu has made it very clear that the G.V.N. is not ready completely to replace United States troops in the immediate future:

I can tell you that even though we are determined and will do our best to replace the maximum number, and as fast as possible, the American combat troops . . . we still do have some restrictions, restrictions regarding equipment and

funds so we can do that only gradually . . . if the U.S. government helps us with enough equipment and enough funds, we can say that we will replace a very important amount of American combat troops by 1970. . . .

Not the totality of the combat troops by the end of 1970, but I would say a great amount. . . .²⁷

As Henry Kissinger has stated:

American objectives should . . . be (1) to bring about a staged withdrawal of external forces, North Vietnamese and American, (2) thereby to create a maximum incentive for the contending forces in South Vietnam to work out a political agreement.²⁸

Thus, the main problem facing the United States is to continue to withdraw enough support from the G.V.N. to convince Hanoi and the N.L.F./P.R.G. that G.V.N. strength is increasing and to convince the G.V.N. to make rapid progress towards the replacement of the United States. At the same time, withdrawal must not be so rapid that it appears the G.V.N. is on the verge of collapse. If it appears that the G.V.N. is on the verge of collapse, a self-fulfilling prophecy will be created.

Therefore, 1970 is likely to present a picture very similar to that of 1969. As long as the fundamental disagreement remains between the G.V.N. and N.L.F./P.R.G. over the level and methods of participation in the political system of South Vietnam and as long as the United States does not unilaterally withdraw, agreement is unlikely. Without agreement, the war continues.

CAMBODIA'S STRATEGY OF SURVIVAL

(Continued from page 348)

which we are threatened for as long as it is possible to do so.²¹

In the past, Sihanouk's diplomatic and political moves have been generally successful. Only time will tell if his most recent actions, which can by no means be interpreted as a full-scale opening to the West, will do as well.

²¹ *Kambuja Monthly Review*, January 15, 1968, p. 12, citing Sihanouk's press conference of November 7, 1967.

²⁶ *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (July 13-20, 1969), 1.

²⁷ Nguyen Van Thieu, press conference of July 19, 1969; complete text with questions and answers reprinted in *Viet-Nam Bulletin*, III (July 29, 1969), 8-14.

²⁸ Henry A. Kissinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 230-231.

CRISIS IN MALAYSIA

(Continued from page 354)

is an impossible dream. Any attempt to realize it could lead to racial strife as bitter as that between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East. To the Bornean peoples of Sabah and Sarawak, a dictatorial central government of Malays is completely alien and will encourage those who see separatism as the goal for these states.

Malaysia is indeed at a crossroad. One way could lead to disaster. It is to be hoped that the spirit of racial toleration that has long existed in the country will influence her leaders to take the path of cooperation and progress towards a free, democratic society in which all the races can preserve what is most dear to them in their culture and language, while working together as good Malaysians.

RECURRING PROBLEMS IN LAOS

(Continued from page 363)

troops assigned to Laos might well require increased United States troop support in Thailand. The only casualty figures available in September, 1969, showed 97 United States pilots listed as missing in Laos and 25 advisers killed in ground fighting there.

On October 7, President Nixon met with Prince Souvanna Phouma in Washington and assured him that the United States would insist on the withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces from Laos and Cambodia as part of any settlement of the war in Vietnam. Two days later, the Premier told newspapermen that "the President understands what the duty of the United States is in this regard—namely to protect the independence, the territorial integrity and the neutrality of Laos." Until United States Asian policy is clarified, there will be lingering doubts over the size of United States troop commitments in Southeast Asia and over the limits, if any, placed on their activities in Laos and Thailand.

The administration's dilemma is plain. An uncomfortable parallel with earlier United States experience in Vietnam may be developing. After eight years of American preoccupation with the war in Vietnam, attention is broadening to include Thailand and Laos.

LAND REFORM IN VIETNAM

(Continued from page 332)

My just-concluded field work persuades me that the countrywide occupancy "freeze" is being widely adhered to. It has been well publicized; it involves a highly visible action if it is violated; and in areas where the new local-force units ("Popular Forces," "Regional Forces," and "Local Self Defense Forces") have received some 500,000 rifles, the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) can no longer trample on peasants' legal rights with impunity. The rent "freeze" (supposedly at a zero level in newly secured areas) involves more clandestine violations, and appears to be only spottily effective.

Third, there was an almost disastrous decision in February, 1969, to design the biggest, final part of the program—involving transfer of some, most, or all of the 3,000,000 acres of privately owned lands that are farmed by tenants—as a "voluntary" purchase program. This would have merely urged landlord transfers for 2 to 3 years and then would have "required" them only when the administrators could determine (with the land records for three out of eight villages totally destroyed) that a landlord held more than 37, or perhaps 75, acres. Fortunately, President Thieu took a personal hand, which resulted in the scrapping of the "voluntary" plan, the sacking of the land reform minister, and the drafting of the sweeping "Land to the Tiller" bill and its presentation, in early July, to the lower house. This bill would affect *all* of the 3,000,000 acres of land that are cultivated by tenants or non-owners, and would make *all* Vietnamese peasants the owners of the land they till. The regime of tenant farming for a million families would be ended in a drastically simplified and rapid way:

- All land not tilled by the owner would be affected (so there would be no need to apply a "retention limit" under which each owner would have to make a "declaration" of how much he owns, with the onus on the administrators to find out if he is lying).

- The peasant tilling the land would receive it *free* (so there would be no occasion for corrupt administrators to dun the peasant for payments and the message would be the simplest possible: you don't pay anything to anybody).

- The effect would be *nationwide* (so that peasants tilling land in insecure areas could nevermore be goaded to support the Vietcong with the threat that landlords would otherwise return: "negative land reform" would be gone for good).

- Confirmation of title would come via a highly simplified village-level application procedure, involving only a few days' delay, and requiring neither the shifting of families, the shifting of present boundaries, nor the resurveying of the land.

- Landlords would be fully compensated (20 per cent in cash, 80 per cent in 8-year inflation-adjusting bonds). The total cost would be \$400 million, equal to between five and six days' cost of the war.

The bill, in fact, represents one of the great non-Communist land reforms of the twentieth century, even more sweeping, for example, than those of Japan and South Korea. The "Land to the Tiller" program, however, is now in deep political trouble, the basic difficulty being that the South Vietnamese landlords do not trust the bonds. Because of this, they combined their influence in the lower house with another group that sees opposition (shortsightedly would be an understatement) as a way of preventing Thieu from increasing his political power. This combined opposition eviscerated the bill—putting in a 37-acre "retention limit" and adding that only "legal" occupants could receive land—and even then added a provision boosting the cash portion of compensation for the landlords from 20 per cent to 60 to 70 per cent.

Now the upper house is considering the

bill. In a heartening demonstration of firmness, President Thieu has asked to have it amended to its original strong version. Under Vietnamese law, the upper house amendments, if any, will prevail unless overridden by two-thirds of the total membership of the lower house. Even then President Thieu can amend and will prevail, unless his amendments are overridden by a majority of the joint membership of the two houses. Thus, for the moment, with President Thieu's continued exhibition of firmness, land reform is "up" again after its lower house drubbing.

But whether the upper house amends and—if not—whether President Thieu amends and is not overridden, now depend crucially on the credibility of the compensation to the landlords.

As this was written, pressures appeared to be building for a United States declaration of financial support for the program—consistent with President Richard Nixon's strong general statement of support for the program in the Midway communiqué of June, 1969. Whether such a statement is made may well be decisive in determining whether, as this is being read, the mass of South Vietnamese peasants are finally becoming owner-farmers, or whether the chance to achieve an impact during the 1969 main Delta harvest period (December to February) has been missed. If, finally, land reform goes "down" again, it may well be for the final count.

THAILAND AFTER VIETNAM

(Continued from page 343)

sentatives. Insurgents, especially those aided materially from abroad, can conquer popular as well as unpopular governments, but the feat is more difficult. Thailand might well be the place where communism is finally defeated in Southeast Asia.

CONTINUED ECONOMIC GROWTH

Thailand's economic growth will continue. But it may slow down considerably without sufficient planning and compensatory activity. Puey Ungphakorn, respected governor of the

Bank of Thailand, said in August, 1969, that the ultimate withdrawal of United States military forces from Thailand will mean the loss of \$150 million a year and 50,000 unemployed.¹⁸ Some observers would multiply Puey's estimated job loss three times. There is considerable "fat" in the Thai economy, however, and Economics Minister Bunchana Attakhor, former Ambassador to the United States, has already begun the task of reducing some of it. In the years 1965-1968, for example, Thailand could afford the luxury of importing used cars from Japan, but this type of spending can be curtailed with no effect on the country's economic development. And stoppage of the import of such used cars was one of Bunchana's first acts as economics minister.

Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman's call for talks on the removal of United States forces from Thailand may have been related to the question of the country's future economic growth. The withdrawal of United States troops from South Vietnam, however modest, came as a distinct surprise to the Thai, and the September, 1969, Thai-American negotiations were in fact concerned primarily with the timing and number of future United States troop removals from Thailand. This information would be helpful in planning necessary compensatory economic activity.¹⁹ For many Thai—from bar girls to owners of housing servicing some of the American personnel—the impact may be great. Many such persons, however, could return to their former occupations. Other sectors of the Thai economy are not at all (or hardly) dependent on United States military spending, though there are those who say that as much as half of Thailand's recent annual economic growth rate of eight per cent derives from American spending related to Vietnam. Much of the infrastructure developed during these years—the roads, for example—will remain after the Americans go

home. In addition, not all the American military personnel will go home for some time to come; many will stay until the bombing ends in both Vietnam and Laos.

After the war ends in Vietnam, Thailand will probably still be a country of fairly rapid economic growth, with soldiers in politics, and troubled regions and minorities. If the 1970's require greater self-reliance on the part of the Southeast Asian nations, it should be remembered that no nation in the area has been more self-reliant over a longer period of history than Thailand. Thailand will need help after the war ends in Vietnam, particularly if the war in Laos worsens. It will probably not need so much help—by a big margin—as Vietnam. The Thai have survived encroachments in the past from Laos, Burma, and even Malaysia, and they should survive the new encroachments, however novel and revolutionary in character. On such a probability rest the hopes of many other Southeast Asians.

BOOK REVIEWS

(Continued from page 364)

LOUIS XIV. BY JOHN B. WOLF. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968. 678 pages, maps, illustrations, index, \$12.50.)

No life of Louis XIV in English has been attempted since the works of Petrie, Ogg and Ashley, the last of these published 20 years ago. Tremendously detailed, reaching into all aspects of French life, institutions and politics, this is more than the story of Louis XIV: it treats France in his time and, to some extent, Europe too.

For those not frightened by his massive work, Wolf has marshalled a great mass of facts about the king, his servants, court and mistresses, his army, his enterprises, his innovations and his land. This is copious fare, well-served for a deliberate diner. It is warmly recommended for readers who have time, curiosity and a healthy appetite.

Eugen Weber

University of California,
Los Angeles

¹⁸ "Bangkok in a Spin," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, September 11, 1969, p. 650.

¹⁹ See "Thailand and Korea: But You Can't Just Sail Away," *The Economist*, August 30, 1969, p. 22.

THE MONTH IN REVIEW

A CURRENT HISTORY chronology covering the most important events of October, 1969, to provide a day-by-day summary of world affairs.

INTERNATIONAL

Disarmament

Oct. 7—A joint draft treaty calling for a ban on nuclear weapons on the ocean floor is submitted to the 25-nation disarmament conference by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. A 12-mile off-shore limit is proposed; beyond this point no nuclear mines or other weapons of mass destruction would be permitted.

Oct. 25—Preliminary discussions between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. leading to Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) are scheduled to open in Helsinki, Finland, on November 17.

European Economic Community (Common Market)

(See also *France*)

Oct. 28—After 15 hours of debate, the Finance Ministers of the Common Market countries agree on a formula that will offset losses to German farmers incurred by the upward revaluation of the mark.

Middle East Crisis

(See also *Lebanon*)

Oct. 4—A predawn attack by U.A.R. troops across the Suez Canal is repulsed by Israeli soldiers. A major artillery duel follows.

Oct. 7—Israeli jets attack Jordanian positions following Jordanian shelling of Israeli settlements.

Denis Michael Rohan, the Australian accused of setting fire to the Al Aksa Mosque in Jerusalem on August 20, 1969, pleads guilty at his trial and says he is suffering from mental disease.

Oct. 13—A home rule plan for West Bank Arabs is proposed by Israeli Deputy Premier Yigal Allon. The 650 thousand

Arabs would receive increased responsibility for education, commerce, religious affairs and local police.

Oct. 23—Arab terrorists explode bombs under apartment houses in Haifa, killing 2 Israelis and injuring 16.

Israeli settlements are shelled from Jordan.

Oct. 24—Israel will not stand idly by if foreign armies enter Lebanon, according to Deputy Premier Allon.

U.A.R. jets bomb Israeli bases in Sinai.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

Oct. 11—A larger role for European members of NATO is demanded by Erik Blumenfeld, West German defense specialist.

Oct. 16—The Political Committee of NATO announces it will present a resolution urging concerted NATO pressure on the Greek military government to force it to return to democratic rule.

Oct. 18—The Secretary General of NATO, Manlio Brosio, urges West Europe to improve its defenses. He cites U.S. debate over its heavy military commitments as the reason why Europe should assume a larger share of the defense burden.

Oct. 20—Denis Healy, British Defense Minister, asks West Europe to assume a fairer share of the defense burden.

United Nations

Oct. 12—The Special Committee on Apartheid files its annual report with the 126-member General Assembly. The report asks for a basic change in the strategy of opposition to apartheid in South Africa, calling the trade embargo appeals "fruitless." The committee urges aid to the South African liberation movement.

Oct. 18—John C. Cairns, head of the Literacy Division of the U.N. Economic and Social Council, reports that birth rates are outstripping education efforts and that the world rate of illiteracy is rising. A study of more than 90 countries shows that in the past decade 60 million illiterates have been added to the world population, for a total of 800 million illiterates.

Oct. 20—Elected to 2-year terms in the Security Council are Syria, Poland, Burundi, Nicaragua and Sierra Leone. Other non-permanent members with one year left to serve are Colombia, Finland, Nepal, Spain and Zambia.

War in Vietnam

(See also *U.S., Foreign Policy*)

Oct. 2—Last week's death toll of U.S. servicemen in Vietnam is reported to be 95, the lowest weekly figure in 2 years.

Oct. 4—Filipino troops will be withdrawn from Vietnam sometime in November, 1969, according to Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos. The Philippines have 2,000 troops in South Vietnam.

Oct. 6—Rocket attacks are launched against U.S. and South Vietnamese positions, largely in the Mekong Delta region.

Oct. 12—A decrease in B-52 bombing strikes against enemy targets is admitted by the U.S. military command in Saigon.

Oct. 13—According to U.S. spokesmen, the troop strength of U.S. forces in Vietnam has been reduced to 505,600 men.

Oct. 16—At the Paris peace talks, direct and secret talks between the U.S. and the Vietcong are proposed by North Vietnam.

U.S. Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird says several thousand U.S. soldiers will have to remain in Vietnam after the fighting ends to train and advise South Vietnamese troops.

Oct. 17—The government of South Vietnam says its patrol boats fired on and hit a ship belonging to the U.S.S.R. in territorial waters off Danang.

Oct. 21—Spokesmen for the U.S. Department of Defense reject a unilateral ceasefire.

Oct. 22—A major military base near Saigon is turned over to South Vietnamese forces by U.S. troops.

Oct. 30—North Vietnam rejects a proposal made at the Paris peace talks by U.S. delegate Henry Cabot Lodge for private talks among the 4 principal delegates.

Warsaw Pact

Oct. 31—A joint statement by the Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Pact countries requests an all-European conference in the first half of 1970. Helsinki, Finland, is suggested as a possible site.

ARGENTINA

Oct. 10—The government frees 59 of the 159 political prisoners who have been held without trial since July, 1969, under a state-of-siege law.

AUSTRALIA

Oct. 26—Returns from the national elections indicate a narrow lead for the ruling Conservative coalition, which has won 61 seats. The Labor party has won 58. Ballots for six seats have not yet been counted.

BOLIVIA

Oct. 17—The military government nationalizes the Bolivian Gulf Company. Control of the firm, a Gulf Oil Company subsidiary, is handed to the army and the Petroleum Board. Compensation to the company will be determined by a special government commission.

BRAZIL

Oct. 5—Observers in Brazil report that divisions within the military are growing over the selection of a successor to President Artur da Costa e Silva, who suffered a stroke on August 31, 1969.

Oct. 7—The military selects General Emílio Garrastazú Médici as President of Brazil. Médici pledges to honor all foreign commitments and work for price stability.

CAMBODIA

Oct. 14—Citing Cambodia's financial problems, Prince Norodom Sihanouk asks the

International Control Commission to leave the country by December 31. He says the team may stay if other countries will pay Cambodia's share of the team's expenses.

CANADA

Oct. 7—During a one-day strike by 3,700 police and 2,400 firemen over a pay dispute, the city of Montreal experiences a severe crime wave. Holdups are staged at 10 banks and 9 other commercial establishments; one person is killed and 4 wounded in outbreaks of violence; and many fires are reported.

Oct. 23—A government spokesman tells the opening session of Parliament that Canada reserves the exclusive right to explore and exploit the resources of the North American Arctic islands. Recent discoveries of oil in northern Alaska have focused Canadian attention on the area.

CHILE

Oct. 4—The Kennecott Copper Company and the government of Chile announce a new agreement under which Kennecott will pay additional taxes on copper output. This will increase Chile's revenues by about one-third.

Oct. 21—President Eduardo Frei Montalva imposes a state of seige and suspends Congress after 2 army regiments rise in rebellion. The soldiers call their action a strike for higher wages.

CHINA, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF (Communist)

(See also U.S.S.R.)

Oct. 1—A National Day mass meeting held in Peking to celebrate the 20th anniversary of China's Communist government is attended by Party Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

Oct. 4—*Hsinhua*, the official press agency, confirms that China exploded 2 nuclear blasts in September, 1969. One was China's first underground test, and the second was "a new hydrogen bomb" exploded in the air.

Oct. 7—*Hsinhua* announces that China and

the U.S.S.R. have agreed to hold talks on border disputes.

Oct. 14—Peking's Revolutionary Committee publishes a plan of economic development, its first since 1966. Independence and self-reliance are stressed. Dispersal of industry as a precaution against possible war damage is planned.

Oct. 20—Peking radio announces the beginning of talks between the U.S.S.R. and China on a possible settlement of the border dispute.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Oct. 3—The official news agency reports that the Slovak regional government and the Communist party have purged 19 reformers.

Oct. 11—*Rude Pravo*, the Communist party newspaper, prints a warning from Communist party leader Gustav Husak that the party is not to be a slaughterhouse for the butchery of fallen liberals.

Oct. 14—In a plea for harder work to help the ailing Czechoslovak economy, Husak tells metal plant workers he is not a reactionary.

Oct. 15—Former party leader Alexander Dubcek is removed as chairman of the Federal Assembly and replaced by conservative Communist Dalibor Hanes.

Oct. 16—In a speech to the Federal Assembly, Premier Oldrich Cernik pledges to strengthen the army and the police and calls for new purges and stricter discipline.

Oct. 17—Czechoslovak citizens are forbidden to visit Yugoslavia.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Oct. 19—A rally by the anti-government Dominican Revolutionary party is disrupted by violence. Scores of people are arrested.

Oct. 20—Submachine guns and tear gas grenades are used to break up a march of students at the University of Santo Domingo.

FEDERATION OF GULF EMIRATES

Oct. 22—Sheik Zayed bin Sultan al-Mihayan of Abu Dhabi is elected President of the 9-nation federation established today. The

other 8 states are Sharja, Ras el Khaima, Fujaira, Bahrein, Ajman, Dubai, Qatar and Umm al Qaiwain.

FRANCE

Oct. 1—The government acts to increase the minimum hourly wage to 3.27 francs (about 60¢). This 3.8 per cent increase will affect about 1 million wage earners.

The British-French jet transport plane, the *Concorde*, breaks the sound barrier in a test flight, flying for 9 minutes at 1.05 times the speed of sound.

Oct. 8—The Bank of France raises its discount rate to 8 per cent, the highest in its history. This is an attempt by the government to support the franc, which has been weakened as speculators invest in the German mark.

Oct. 13—Demonstrators and police clash in a Paris suburb as workers and merchants protest government financial policy.

Oct. 26—Maurice Couve de Murville, former Premier in the government of Charles de Gaulle, loses an election for a seat in the National Assembly.

GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF (West)

Oct. 3—The Social Democratic party leader, Willy Brandt, and the Free Democratic party leader, Walter Scheel, reach agreement on a coalition government.

Oct. 21—The *Bundestag* (lower house of parliament) elects Willy Brandt as Chancellor by a vote of 251 to 235. The coalition of Social Democrats and Free Democrats pledges a program of domestic reforms in education and science, and improved ties with Poland.

Oct. 24—Chancellor Willy Brandt revalues the mark upward by 9.2896 per cent. It now equals 27.3224 cents. The value of the mark has been allowed to fluctuate freely since September 29, 1969.

GHANA

Oct. 21—Citing the corruption and inefficiency of former President Kwame Nkrumah's regime, the new Prime Minister,

Kobi A. Busia, tells a Washington, D.C., audience that Ghana will need help to repay her \$1 billion debt.

GREECE

Oct. 1—The military government censors any mention of the call for prompt restoration of democracy which was voiced last night by former Premier Constantine Caramanlis. Another former Premier, Panayotis Kanellopoulos, hails the Caramanlis statement.

Oct. 15—Replying to a move by Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands to oust Greece from the 18-nation Council of Europe, the Greek military government says it will not resign.

Oct. 16—John Pשמazoglu, former Deputy Governor of the Bank of Greece, contradicts claims of economic improvement made by the Greek military government. Pשמazoglu says there has been a "marked slowdown" since 1967.

INDIA

Oct. 1—Government officials put the death toll from last week's religious riots in Gujarat province at 500. Unofficial estimates set the death toll at two to four times that figure. Most of the victims were Muslims in the city of Ahmadabad.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, speaking on the centenary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, voices her grief over the communal rioting which swept Gujarat province last week.

Oct. 14—The Indian ambassador to Morocco and the Indian chargé d'affaires in Jordan are recalled to express displeasure over India's exclusion from the Islamic conference held in Rabat, Morocco, last month.

Oct. 24—The Communist-led government of the state of Kerala collapses as the right Communists and left Communists feud over charges of corruption.

ISRAEL

(See also *Middle East Crisis*)

Oct. 29—Incomplete returns from yesterday's elections for the *Knesset* show that the

ruling Labor party (Mapai) has been deprived of an absolute majority. Premier Golda Meir, the leader of the Labor party, will be forced to form a coalition with the Mapam party in order to continue in office.

JAPAN

Oct. 7—Japanese negotiators taking part in a 3-day trade negotiation session between Japan and the U.S. offer to relax some of the import controls which have limited U.S. sales to Japan.

Oct. 21—Students demonstrating on "international antiwar day" paralyze Tokyo as they smash windows and fight with police. 1,222 students are arrested.

KENYA

Oct. 27—Opposition leader Oginga Odinga is placed under house arrest by President Jomo Kenyatta for organizing a demonstration in which 11 persons are killed. Seven of Odinga's colleagues are also arrested.

LAOS

Oct. 3—The Premier of Laos, Prince Souvanna Phouma, again denies that U.S. troops are in Laos.

Oct. 20—A *New York Times* report from Laos describes a secret Laotian army, largely manned by Meo hill tribesmen, which is supported by the United States. The training forces are reportedly members of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, which also runs the Air America and Continental Air Services that supply and airlift the troops.

Oct. 22—The Pathet Lao says 12,000 U.S. soldiers are involved in the Laotian war.

Oct. 30—U.S. State Department spokesman Robert McCloskey reveals the U.S. has asked the U.S.S.R. to help ease tensions in Laos by using its influence with North Vietnam.

LEBANON

Oct. 1—The government of Lebanon announces that intelligence officers have foiled an attempt by 2 Soviet embassy offi-

cials to steal a *Mirage* jet fighter plane. The Russians are wounded in the ensuing gun battle.

Oct. 4—A plot by Lebanese leftists to overthrow the government is linked to the attempted plane theft by 2 Soviet diplomats.

Oct. 21—Arab guerrillas hiding in a village on the Lebanese border are shelled by the Lebanese army.

The Parliament meets for the first time in six months, and reelects Sabry Hamadah as Speaker. The country is being run on a caretaker basis since the formal resignation of Premier Rashid Karami in April, 1969. Karami, a Muslim, is serving as "caretaker Premier."

Oct. 22—Rashid Karami resigns again because of the clash between Lebanese army forces and Palestinian guerrillas.

Oct. 25—300 Arab guerrillas from Syria invade Lebanon.

Oct. 26—U.A.R. President Gamal Abdel Nasser arrives in Beirut to attempt to resolve the crisis caused by the Palestinian guerrillas.

Oct. 28—The Commander in Chief of the Lebanese Army, Emile Bustani, flies to Cairo to discuss concessions Lebanon is willing to make to the guerrillas.

Oct. 30—Using tanks, mortars and machine guns, the Palestinian guerrillas and Lebanese troops exchange fire in a 12-hour battle in the eastern part of the country.

LIBYA

Oct. 2—Premier Mahoud Soliman al-Maghreby outlaws the teaching of non-Arabic languages, forcing the departure of 143 U.S. Peace Corps members who have been teaching English in the schools.

Oct. 28—The new military regime that overthrew the government last month serves formal notice that the U.S. must evacuate Wheelus Air Base, near Tripoli, by December 24, 1970.

MEXICO

(See U.S., Foreign Policy)

PORTUGAL

- Oct. 4—For the first time since 1961, the war Portugal is waging to retain her colonies in Africa is discussed in public. A rally by opponents of the Premier, Marcello Caetano, cheers an appeal to end the war.
- Oct. 5—A demonstration celebrating Republic Day and paying homage to the founders of the liberal republic of 1910 is broken up by police with rifles and dogs.
- Oct. 16—Opponents of the Caetano regime charge that they are being beaten and intimidated while campaigning.
- Oct. 27—The ruling regime wins all the seats in Portugal's first election in 43 years.

SOMALIA

- Oct. 15—A Somalian policeman assassinates President Abdirrashid Ali Shermarke, who was touring drought-stricken villages. No reason is given for the crime.
- Oct. 16—All political activity is banned by the government following the killing of President Shermarke.
- Oct. 21—Army and police seize power in Somalia. The Cabinet is imprisoned.
- Oct. 22—The military Supreme Revolutionary Council which seized power yesterday bans all political parties and promises to work for the country's development through socialism.

SOUTHERN YEMEN

- Oct. 24—Salem Ali Rubaya, chairman of the Presidential Council, announces that diplomatic relations with the U.S. have been severed. The support voiced by the U.S. for the Lebanese government in its fight with Arab guerrillas is the reason given for the break.

SUDAN

- Oct. 28—The Premier of Sudan, Abubakr Awadallah, is deposed by the Revolutionary Command Council in a dispute over Communist influence in the regime. His post is taken by the chairman of the Council, Gaafar al-Nimeiry.

SWEDEN

- Oct. 1—The former education minister, Olof Palme, is selected leader of the Social Democratic party. This ensures his election as the next Premier. He will replace retiring Tage Erlander, who has held the post for 23 years.

SYRIA

- Oct. 13—The government releases 2 Arab guerrillas who were imprisoned after they hijacked a Trans World Airlines plane on August 29, 1969. The 2 Israeli male passengers are still in prison.

U.S.S.R.

(See also *China, People's Republic of; Intl, Disarmament*)

- Oct. 18—First Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Kuznetsov leads a delegation to Peking to begin border talks with the Chinese.
- Oct. 19—The Soviet press agency *Tass* distributes excerpts from a talk by ideologist Mikhail Suslov assailing China's ideology.
- Oct. 25—*Tass* publishes a statement urging big power noninterference in Lebanese problems.

U.A.R.

(See also *Lebanon; Intl, Middle East Crisis*)

- Oct. 29—The government announces it will undertake to mediate the dispute between Lebanon and the Palestinian guerrillas.

UNITED KINGDOM

- Oct. 4—British troops, in Belfast, Northern Ireland, to prevent fighting between Catholics and Protestants, suppress new rioting. Protestants battle the troops and the Royal Ulster Constabulary after an incident in the eastern district of the city.
- Oct. 5—A crowd of Protestant extremists is dispersed with tear gas after 5 hours of street fighting.

British Prime Minister Harold Wilson makes several Cabinet changes. He appoints George Thomson as Deputy Foreign Secretary to help push Britain's application to join the European Common Market.

Oct. 11—In Belfast, a crowd of 1,500 Protestants moving toward a Catholic apartment house attacks police barricades guarding the building. One policeman is killed and 3 police and 1 soldier are wounded.

Oct. 12—600 more soldiers of the British army are sent to Northern Ireland to help keep order. A raid on Protestant homes uncovers gasoline bombs and ammunition.

UNITED STATES

Civil Rights

(See also *Supreme Court*)

Oct. 7—In an address to the National Congress of American Indians, Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D., Mass.) is severely critical of the policies of the Federal government in dealing with the Indians.

Oct. 8—Vice President Spiro Agnew and Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel address the National Congress of American Indians; the Secretary of the Interior is repeatedly booed and hissed.

Oct. 9—In Chicago, 2,500 National Guardsmen are called to duty to aid police in quieting disturbances created by radical factions of the Students for a Democratic Society, who are holding demonstrations timed to coincide with the trial of eight radicals charged with fomenting disorders during the Democratic National Convention in August, 1968.

Oct. 13—Secretary of Commerce Maurice H. Stans announces that 20 major oil companies have agreed to increase the number of service station franchises held by minority group members to 25,000 within five years; the government has asked automobile manufacturers to provide 100 dealerships for minority group members within the next five years.

Oct. 14—In the first school desegregation suit initiated by the federal government in a northeastern state, the Justice Department files suit against Waterbury, Connecticut, charging racial segregation in Waterbury's elementary schools.

Oct. 16—District Judge Robert R. Merhige, Jr., orders all city and county jails in Vir-

ginia desegregated within 30 days and all state prisons in Virginia desegregated within 90 days; excepted from the order are maximum security facilities because desegregation there may require more time.

Oct. 22—The Justice Department asks the U.S. District Court in Atlanta, Georgia, for a preliminary injunction in connection with its August 1 suit calling for desegregation of all of the state's school systems; the injunction calls for full integration by September, 1970.

Oct. 24—A 3-judge federal panel orders 36 Alabama school systems to submit school desegregation plans for the 1970-1971 school year by January 15, 1970.

Economy

(See also *Government*)

Oct. 6—It is reported in *The New York Times* that the unemployment rate rose to 4 per cent in September, 1969, for the first time since October, 1967.

Oct. 7—In testimony before the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, Secretary of the Treasury David M. Kennedy says that the 4 per cent unemployment rate is "acceptable" to the administration and that the administration believes that it is necessary to continue policies which may force the unemployment rate even higher.

Foreign Policy

(See also *Intl., Disarmament*)

Oct. 1—Senator Hugh Scott (R., Pa.), Senate minority leader, reports that President Nixon reiterated his determination to prevent a U.S. defeat in Vietnam to a meeting of some 10 Republican Senators last night.

Oct. 2—Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield (D., Mont.) calls for a stand-still ceasefire in Vietnam.

Oct. 3—Illinois Republican Senator Charles Percy asks the administration to end offensive ground operations and to stop shelling and bombing in South Vietnam "as long as the enemy takes no advantage of the situation."

Oct. 5—Former Vice President Hubert H.

Humphrey asks the President to reveal his plans for troop withdrawals from Vietnam to Democratic Congressional leaders in private talks.

Oct. 10—After 3 days of conferences on Operation Intercept (the U.S. campaign to end smuggling of marijuana and other drugs into the U.S. from Mexico), representatives of the U.S. and Mexico issue a joint statement saying that the U.S. will “adjust” its border inspection procedures “to eliminate unnecessary inconvenience, delay and irritation.”

After private conferences with Presidential adviser Henry Kissinger and with the President, Humphrey tells newsmen that the President is “proceeding along the right path in Vietnam.”

Oct. 11—Senator George Aiken (R., Vt.), senior Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, suggests that the President be allowed more time to develop a policy of orderly troop withdrawal from Vietnam.

Oct. 12—Secretary of State William Rogers charges that critics of the President’s policy in Vietnam have eliminated any possibility of a negotiated settlement of the war in the near future.

Oct. 13—In a letter to a Georgetown University student, President Nixon reiterates his statement that nationwide peace demonstrations on October 15 will not affect his policies.

Oct. 14—The Department of State reveals plans to discuss a new agreement with the Philippines regarding U.S. military bases there.

Oct. 15—Nationwide observance of “Moratorium Day” to protest continued U.S. participation in the war in Vietnam is reported to be the largest public protest yet made against the war.

Oct. 19—Vice President Spiro Agnew says that the Moratorium Day of October 15 was “encouraged by effete corps of impudent snobs who characterize themselves as intellectuals.”

Oct. 20—Senate majority leader Mike Mans-

field of Montana and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee J. W. Fulbright of Arkansas express confidence that President Nixon is trying to deescalate the war in Vietnam.

The President meets with Ghanaian Prime Minister Kofi A. Busia at the White House.

Secretary of State William Rogers declares that many Americans wanted to register concern for peace in Vietnam “and we listened to those voices with respect”

Oct. 21—A “fact sheet” is sent to Congress by the White House reviewing Administration efforts to end the war in Vietnam.

White House press secretary Ronald Ziegler says the President does not “put a leash” on the Vice President or members of his Cabinet.

Oct. 22—In an interview in Tokyo, former Vice President Hubert Humphrey says that the U.S. has achieved its aims in Vietnam and has fulfilled its obligation to the South Vietnamese.

Oct. 23—Iran’s Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and President Nixon exchange promises of continuing friendship at the end of a 3-day state visit. No arms or oil agreements are announced.

Oct. 28—Fulbright declares that the U.S. is involved in a secret war in Laos without the knowledge or permission of Congress.

The State Department declares that high-level diplomats of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. are conferring on the crisis in Lebanon.

Oct. 29—Secretary of State William Rogers challenges Fulbright’s claim that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has not been fully informed by the State Department on U.S. military operations in Laos.

Oct. 31—In his first major policy statement on Latin America, President Nixon calls on the Latin American nations to take the lead in their social and economic progress. U.S. noninterference is pledged, and the existence of democratic regimes will no longer be a precondition for assistance from the U.S.

Government

(See also *Economy, Supreme Court*)

Oct. 1—The National Security Council issues a directive to the Selective Service System to allow graduate students who are eligible for the draft to finish the academic year before induction.

The director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Donald Rumsfeld, announces that he is replacing the entire Civil Rights Division of the agency because it is "inefficient."

Oct. 2—President Richard Nixon names Casper Willard Weinberger, California's Finance Director, as chairman of the Federal Trade Commission.

In testimony before a Senate subcommittee investigating alleged improprieties and corruption in the operation of Army service clubs, Lieutenant Colonel Jack G. Pruett says that the former Provost Marshal General, Major General Carl C. Turner, ordered the name of Sergeant Wooldridge removed from reports dealing with alleged improprieties.

Oct. 6—The Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations hears charges that the former Provost Marshal General of the Army, Carl C. Turner, used his official position to obtain arms that he later sold for personal gain.

Oct. 7—Major General Turner tells the Senate subcommittee that he received free guns for his personal use although he signed receipts specifying that the guns were for Army use.

Oct. 8—After *The New York Times* obtained a copy of a blacklist of scientists compiled by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), a department spokesman concedes that the blacklisting of some scientists to prevent them from serving on federal advisory panels has been a practice of the department for years.

The House Post Office Committee rejects the President's suggestion that the Post Office Department should be turned into a public corporation.

Oct. 9—The Department of Health, Education and Welfare says that it established a committee 2 weeks ago to check charges that the department uses blacklisting procedures as part of its security apparatus.

Oct. 11—President Nixon, in what some observers term a "belated" State of the Union Message, asks the Democratic-controlled Congress to join a "working partnership with his administration to pass a legislative program that will "meet the needs of a nation in distress."

Oct. 14—The House of Representatives cuts short debate on the war in Vietnam at 11 P.M., despite the plan of antiwar critics to stage an all-night session in support of the "Moratorium Day" tomorrow. After 3 hours of debate, the House votes 112 to 110 to adjourn.

Oct. 16—The House votes 326 to 10 to approve a bill to encourage banks to make federally guaranteed loans to college students. The bill has passed in the Senate and goes to the White House.

Oct. 17—The White House announces that Arthur F. Burns, former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, will succeed William McChesney Martin, Jr., as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, when Martin's statutory 14-year term expires January 31, 1970.

Oct. 18—Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Robert H. Finch announces that the artificial sweeteners known as cyclamates will be withdrawn from general use in food products in the U.S. because some rats that were fed heavy doses of the sweetener developed cancer of the bladder.

Oct. 19—*The New York Times* reports that it has found a second federal blacklist of scientists; the 48 names include Nobel Prize winner Dr. Salvador Luria of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The lists were prepared within the National Institutes of Health in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Oct. 20—Speaker of the House John W. McCormack (D., Mass.) says that his suspended chief assistant, Dr. Martin Sweig,

was guilty of an "error of judgment" when he interfered in May, 1969, in a case before the Securities and Exchange Commission. Dr. Sweig was suspended without pay on October 16.

Oct. 21—Commissioner of Social Security Robert Ball reveals that the monthly fee for doctor coverage under Medicare will rise from \$4 to "something over \$5."

Oct. 22—Vice President Spiro Agnew says that Senator Edmund Muskie (D., Me.) was suggesting that the President "play Russian roulette with U.S. security" when he urged the President to propose a unilateral 6-month halt in testing multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRV).

Phillip S. Hughes resigns as Deputy Director of the Budget.

Oct. 23—The Army's First Sergeant Major and 3 other enlisted men's club custodians refuse to testify at Senate hearings, invoking the 5th Amendment. Army Secretary Stanley Resor announces that Sergeant Major William O. Wooldridge has been deprived of his command status.

In a memorandum to all high-ranking department officials, HEW Under Secretary John G. Veneman says that if there are any "blacklists" in the department, "they must be discontinued and destroyed."

Oct. 24—McCormack says he expects to run again for the post of Speaker of the House of Representatives. Seeking a 6th term, he denies that he has knowingly permitted his friend, lobbyist Nathan Voloshen, and his aide, Martin Sweig, to use his office or his name improperly to influence federal agencies, state courts or parole officials. Voloshen and Sweig are the subjects of a recent article in *Life* magazine on improper influence.

Oct. 28—The President warns Congress that unless action is speeded on pending appropriation bills, he may not be able to submit a new budget in January, 1970. He declares that Congress has passed only 2 of the 15 money bills needed to finance the government in fiscal 1970.

Oct. 29—Dr. Lee A. DuBridge, executive secretary of the President's Environmental Council, declares that "a coordinated series of actions are being taken by the agencies of the Government" to restrict the use of the weed killer 2,4,5-T; studies have revealed that offspring of mice and rats given relatively large oral doses of the herbicide show "a higher than expected number of deformities."

Oct. 30—Separate statements are issued by President Nixon, Attorney General John Mitchell and HEW Secretary Finch declaring that the administration will support and enforce the Supreme Court's ruling calling for immediate desegregation.

The President declares that he is "very proud to have the Vice President . . . in our Administration and he has done a great job for this Administration."

Labor

Oct. 3—President Nixon orders the dispute between seven railroad carriers and four shop craft unions submitted to a three-member emergency mediation board; the threatened nationwide railroad shutdown had been scheduled for midnight.

Oct. 16—The United Automobile Workers strike against the American Motors Corporation; the three larger automobile manufacturers are not affected.

Oct. 17—Secretary of Labor George P. Shultz announces that the department plans to expand to 55 cities a system of matching unemployed persons to jobs by means of computers; the system is currently under way in six cities.

Oct. 20—The Defense Department announces that 212,000 jobs in defense related industries will be eliminated by next spring as a part of recent cuts in defense spending.

Oct. 27—A coalition of 13 unions strikes against General Electric; 147,000 workers are involved.

Oct. 28—In a decision that could have significant bearing on the present dispute between General Electric and 13 unions, a United States Court of Appeals rules in a

2-to-1 decision that the bargaining approach taken by the company in a 1960 dispute was a violation of the National Labor Relations Act. The company's "take-it-or-leave-it" bargaining approach is deemed in violation.

Military

(See also *Government*)

Oct. 5—The U.S. government announces the payment of \$6,472 to the wife of a Vietnamese allegedly killed by American Special Services soldiers (Green Berets); the Army has dropped the charges placed in August, 1969, against the men implicated in the alleged murder.

Oct. 9—Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird announces that U.S. commanders in South Vietnam are under orders to place the "highest priority" on shifting the burden of the fighting to the South Vietnamese.

Oct. 10—President Richard Nixon announces that effective February 16, 1970, Lieutenant General Lewis B. Hershey will be relieved of his post as director of the Selective Service System; he will become a four-star general and an adviser to the President on manpower mobilization.

Oct. 17—According to *The New York Times*, Defense Secretary Melvin Laird, in a secret memorandum to the National Security Council, has urged the U.S. to halt the production of biological agents for use in warfare.

Oct. 18—In two brief memoranda, the administration proposes reductions in military spending over the next five years; this includes a cut of \$4 billion to \$6 billion for 1971.

Oct. 21—The Defense Department orders an annual independent civilian audit of all officers' and noncommissioned officers' clubs.

Oct. 27—As part of a previously announced defense spending cut of \$3 billion, Secretary Laird announces plans to "consolidate, reduce, realign or close" 307 military bases and activities in the U.S. and abroad;

annual savings of \$609 million are expected to result from the action.

Oct. 30—After a series of questions are given to the Defense Department, its director for defense information, Rodger Bankson, says he has no comment on the report that the Army has produced and stockpiled more than 20,000 poison bullets said to contain Botulinum—a poison that causes a fatal disease of the nervous system.

Politics

Oct. 28—President Nixon appears at a rally on behalf of Linwood Holton, the Republican candidate for Governor of Virginia; it is President Nixon's first purely political appearance since he became President.

Oct. 29—The President travels to New Jersey to support the candidacy of Representative William T. Cahill for Governor.

Supreme Court

Oct. 2—The President restates his support for Judge Clement F. Haynsworth as a Supreme Court Justice. The President nominated Haynsworth on August 21 to succeed Abe Fortas.

Oct. 3—Chief Justice Warren Burger resigns from the board of trustees of the Mayo Foundation, a \$2,000-a-year post.

Oct. 6—The Supreme Court opens its 180th term.

Oct. 13—The Court agrees to decide whether nonreligious young men can be denied draft exemption as conscientious objectors because they object on moral grounds to serving in the war in Vietnam.

The Court agrees to decide whether the New York legislature violated federal law when it cut welfare payments for mothers of dependent children. It will also decide whether states can legally set an absolute limit on the amount of welfare aid money a family with dependent children can receive.

The Court refuses to rule on the constitutionality of a New Jersey gun control law

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THE MONTH IN REVIEW

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that requires gun buyers to state whether or not they have ever belonged to organizations that aim to overthrow the government.

Oct. 27—The Supreme Court agrees to hear an appeal concerning the authority of New York's family court judges to send children to state training schools.

Oct. 29—Replacing its 1955 decision, the Court rules unanimously that school districts must desegregate "at once"; "the obligation of every school district is to terminate dual school systems at once and to operate now and hereafter only unitary schools." The ruling, which refers specifically to school districts in Mississippi, replaces the 1955 decision that called for desegregation "with all deliberate speed." This is the first major decision of the Court under Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, President Nixon's first appointee to the Court.

VIETNAM, REPUBLIC OF (South)

Oct. 29—Thich Thien Minh, a Buddhist monk who has been in prison since February 24, 1969, is released by President Nguyen Van Thieu in observance of South Vietnam's National Day. 300 other political prisoners who were jailed for urging negotiations with the Vietcong will be released this week.

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